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UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

Searching for Sustainable Tourism in the Caribou Mountains

by

John W. Colton



A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation

Edmonton, Alberta

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UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled **SEARCHING FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM IN THE CARIBOU MOUNTAINS** submitted by John W. Colton in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my Grandmother Hazel Colton. She is an extraordinary woman whose unconditional love will continue to grace my life.

ABSTRACT

Indigenous tourism development can provide meaningful opportunities for progress in several dimensions if growth is consistent with the local community's needs and its relationship to the land. Economic diversification, positive social and cultural renewal are just a few examples of change that tourism development can stimulate. This is especially true if the process of development is handled with care and premised initially on the intrinsic association with the land that binds the local people contextually to their environment.

This dissertation explores the initial stages of tourism development by the Little Red River Cree First Nation located in northern Alberta. I focus specifically on articulating the motivations for this development, the challenges associated with tourism development and insights into the processes associated with the pursuit of sustainable native tourism development in the Caribou Mountains.

The study was framed within a qualitative paradigm utilizing methods that were flexible and unobtrusive such as participant observation and formal and informal interviewing. Where appropriate, secondary data from published resources were also used. Data analysis was conducted thematically. Co-researchers were consulted in order to verify the themes arising from the data analysis. Field research was conducted from June 1996 to August 1998 consisting of several three week trips every summer in addition to several winter visits of a shorter duration.

Broad themes that have emerged from the study include: *economic, social-cultural, and political-environmental*. Within each of these themes, sub-themes

developed that further illustrated the underlying motivations for tourism development in the Caribou Mountains. Challenges related to tourism development in the Caribou Mountains were explored through the concept of trap-line tourism. By having accompanied a Cree trapper on his trap-line, issues such as commoditization, the principles of ecotourism versus indigenous tourism, and the nature of host/guest relationships were highlighted.

The concept of control emerged as an underlying theme based on analysis of the data. More specifically, the study indicates that the LRRC First Nation have entered into partnership agreements with industry and government to effect greater control of their traditional territory. The conclusion discusses the implications of this strategy for the potential for sustainable tourism development in the Caribou Mountains. Additional insights were gained through reflection on the community processes associated with the study.

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During the four years dedicated to the completion of this dissertation many individuals have assisted at a number of different levels. I am indebted to Dr. Tom Hinch my supervisor for his support and encouragement throughout my research. My committee members, Drs. Guy Swinnerton, Debra Shogan, Karen Fox, Patricia McCormack, Lisa McDermott and Valene Smith provided useful suggestions that enabled me to accomplish my Ph.D. with integrity and clarity. I am also grateful to the Sustainable Forest Management-Network Centres for Excellence (SFM-NCE) and the Canadian Circumpolar Institute for providing necessary funds in addition to technical and logistical support.

It is through the SFM-NCE that I met Preston and his partner Louise. Our friendship, established during the course of this research is one that will span a lifetime. Preston's wine, guitar and critical insights provided valuable contributions to the development of my research.

Green Room comrades such as Phil Burak and Angela Specht provided humorous respites from research in addition to my colleagues and friends at the School of Outdoor Recreation, Parks and Tourism at Lakehead University. I am especially grateful to Brent, Jenn, Carol, Keeler, Solstice, Pagan, Rachel, Riley and Tinder for our Friday evening rendezvous of pizza and beer. Without these evenings, it is unlikely that I would have completed my dissertation and survived my first year as Assistant Professor sane with an intact sense of humour, however complex.

In many respects the evolving nature of this study reflects the changes in my life at a personal level. Undoubtedly, the completion of this thesis has more to do with my life-time partner Carol and her continual encouragement than anybody else. She grounded me when necessary and made me realize that my research, while important, was just a component of my life among many others of equal importance. With this attitude, I realized that my role in life extended well beyond that of a Ph.D. student and included being a partner, a friend and then; a father. Keeler came into our lives in September, 1998. It is amazing how the dynamics of research become so small when compared with the significance of new life. I thank Carol and Keeler for providing their loving support. I thank my father, Dale Colton, who has throughout my academic career, been a constant source of inspiration. I will never forget the time when on a walk in the mountains of British Columbia, he suggested that I consider teaching as a career. Last but not least, I thank Rachel and Riley. It was Rachel's gentle but persistent encouragement which allowed me to break from my work and walk and run the trails of Mill Creek returning to my work refreshed.

Finally, this study would not have been possible without the financial and spiritual support of the Little Red River Cree First Nation. I hope that I have provided them a glimpse into the processes associated with their struggle for self-government and control over their traditional lands. It is sometimes the perspective of an outsider that allows an insider a comprehensive perspective on their own lives and desires. It is through working with the Little Red River Cree First Nation that I truly began to understand what the values of respect, reciprocity, and empowerment imply.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

A. An Introduction to the Research

Indigenous tourism development can provide meaningful opportunities for progress in several dimensions if growth is consistent with the local community's needs and its relationship to the land. Economic diversification, positive social and cultural renewal are just a few examples of change that tourism development can stimulate. This is especially true if the process of development is handled with care and premised initially on the intrinsic association with the land that binds the local people contextually to their environment. Tourism development should also be premised on the awareness of the community's motivations because success may in fact depend on how a population's needs are operationalized into meaningful development parameters. However, tourism cannot be developed within a vacuum. In fact, it is prudent to become cognizant of the challenges related to this type of development as success may ultimately depend on a combined understanding of the many issues related to development.

The Little Red River Cree (LRRC) First Nation located in northern Alberta is an indigenous community that has just begun exploring tourism development as a means to address economic, social, cultural and political issues within their community. Many tourists want to experience both nature and culture and the LRRC First Nation are in a unique position to develop a form of tourism that is consistent with this market niche given that they are situated in close proximity to natural areas and their indigenous

culture. In this dissertation I explore the initial stages of sustainable tourism development by the Little Red River Cree First Nation in northern Alberta.

B. Research Objectives

The Little Red River Cree (LRRC) First Nation are the traditional stewards of the Caribou Mountains which comprise a significant portion of their traditional land. The LRRC have indicated a desire to pursue sustainable tourism development that is consistent with their traditions. Thus, the central purpose of this dissertation is: **To describe and interpret the initial stages of sustainable native tourism development in the Caribou Mountains.** In order to do so, the study will focus on these specific objectives:

- **To interpret and analyse the factors motivating the Little Red River Cree to pursue tourism development.** Economic factors are listed as the primary objectives for most communities pursuing tourism development (Mathieson & Wall, 1982), and similar claims have been made in the context of native societies (Cornell & Kalt, 1992). However, it has been indicated that native societies can also be motivated by cultural values and a sense of history although there is very little understanding of these issues (de Burlo, 1996).
- **To interpret and analyse the issues and challenges associated with developing a tourism experience in the Caribou Mountains.** While many possible tourism

experiences may exist in the Caribou Mountains, I chose to focus on trap-line tourism since this experience has been advocated by several members of the LRRC First Nation. It is meant, however, to be indicative of a number of possibilities based on traditional activities in the community.

- **To develop insight into the processes associated with the pursuit of sustainable native tourism development.** While the sustainable tourism development research and its documentation in the literature has suggested parameters and tenets for sustainable development (e.g., Bramewell & Lane, 1993; Hunter, 1995) and its outcomes, much of this research has occurred outside a native context. Given the growing demand for native tourism experiences (Hinch & Butler, 1996; Zeppel, 1998), and the subsequent desire for native communities to develop tourism, it is important to more fully understand the issues of sustainable tourism from a native development perspective.

C. A Tourism Study

This dissertation is not an ethnography, rather, ethnographic methods have been used to better understand the LRRC's pursuit of tourism development on their traditional land which is the Caribou Mountains. While there appears to be a number of different approaches in which to pursue the goals of this research, it should be noted that this research is positioned as a tourism development study. Tourism development is a complex process consisting of a myriad of dynamic relationships between the host

community, visitors, and the environment. In order for tourism to develop successfully and to be sustainable, it is helpful to have an understanding of the interactions between these elements. In this way, a tourism experience can be developed that reflects a successful integration of local culture and values of the host community, its relationship with the local environment and the expectations of the visitors.

Researchers engaged in tourism development studies, especially when working directly with local people, have the opportunity to observe, to become involved and to offer new insights into the complexities of this process. They have the opportunity to bridge theory and practice. But in order to move beyond superficial understanding of the complex process of tourism development, a researcher must develop an appreciation and understanding of the local people, their lives, and their perceptions. This understanding is a prerequisite to obtaining significant insight into the process of tourism development. The desired integrated perspective is, therefore, shaped by both social and cultural aspects of the host community and environment, as well as by the academic and professional experience of the researcher.

While it may be difficult for western based researchers to fully understand other cultures, especially those cultures outside the western European framework, it is possible for western-based academics to provide insight into cross-cultural tourism phenomena. The rationale for this claim is that while individual cultures may have different perceptions of how tourism should evolve and what it should entail, the fundamental relationships between the tourist, the host, and the environment are similar throughout the world. In a cross-cultural context, the “truth” of any one culture is not necessarily

dominant over the “truth” of another culture. Thus, to have value, the research does not necessarily have to be considered definitive from all perspectives. While the tourism researcher may not be fully immersed within a particular culture, given appropriate field methods, mutual respect between the local people and the researcher, and an understanding of proper protocol; tourism researchers have the ability to amalgamate these perspectives into an insightful view of the tourism process.

D. Theoretical Approach

As this research progressed, the theoretical underpinnings of the study have emerged and evolved. The LRRC First Nation chose to explore the potential of tourism development in order to alleviate growing concern regarding their economic conditions. This is a social problem. I wished to understand the nature of their pursuit of tourism development. By asking “why?”, the study began to extend itself beyond simply describing a development process, to exploring and analysing issues of a theoretical nature imbedded in the development process.

After stepping back from my research and reflecting on what I had already experienced, I began to understand the broader spatial and temporal historical relationships among the people I was working with and the dominant society in which they live. In the Canadian context, the LRRC First Nation represent an underdeveloped society in terms of economic, social, and political dimensions. With this understanding, I explored the concept of dependency theory premised on the systematic exploitation of an underdeveloped society by a developed society (Dos Santos, 1970; Frank, 1972).

Although normally discussed within the context of nation to nation relationships, Pretes (1988) has noted that this discussion can be extended to include relationships between developed and undeveloped regions within a nation. Weissling (1991) discussed dependency theory as it related to the development and redistribution of Inuit in the 20th century and their relationship with the Government of Canada. Among the tenets articulated in his theoretical framework, one is particularly relevant to this study: “Underdevelopment... includes...a condition which leads to the diminution of indigenous control over their social, cultural, and economic systems” (Weissling 1991, p.32). Native studies literature (e.g., Elias, 1991, 1995) echoes this point and suggests that development in native communities must simultaneously address the economic, social, cultural and environmental needs. An appreciation that native societies have lost control over aspects of their lives has informed this study. However, it has also become apparent that the LRRC First Nation are seeking to regain this control.

In order to gain trust and respect among the people of the LRRC First Nation, I tried to learn their expectations in regards to research and the treatment of Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK). Traditional knowledge is “the accumulated knowledge and understandings of the place of human beings in relation to the world in both an ecological and spiritual sense” (Sewepagaham & Meneen, 1997, p.2). In outlining their perspective on the use of TEK, Chief Johnson Sewepagaham and Chief Meneen (1997) indicated that TEK was not a commodity, but rather a collective consciousness of their people and their relationship with all things.

This holistic perspective contrasts with the departmentalized knowledge generated

at most academic institutions. I gradually realized that TEK was both concrete and abstract and also connected to place. While TEK generally refers to information of an ecological and spiritual nature and has most often been used within the context of biological sciences, the principles which underlie the gathering of TEK apply to research of a social dimension as well. For the purpose of this study, I have emphasized three fundamental TEK principles outlined by the LRRC First Nation. These are respect, empowerment and reciprocity.

E. Organization of Dissertation

This dissertation is organized into eight chapters. The first four chapters lay the foundation of the study by providing: the objectives to the research; an examination of the LRRC First Nation and their historical relationship to the land (Chapter II); a literature review which frames the context of the study (Chapter III); and a methods section which outlines my research philosophy, data collection methods, analysis procedures, and ethical considerations (Chapter IV). Chapter V contains a discussion of the motivations for the LRRC to pursue tourism development in the Caribou Mountains by articulating themes that have emerged from the study. The issues and challenges associated with trap-line tourism development based on my experience travelling on a trap-line with a Cree trapper from the LRRC First Nation are described in Chapter VI. Chapter VII reflects on the LRRC's development approach and offers insight in the processes associated with sustainable tourism development. Finally, Chapter VIII contains the conclusion with discussions on the implications of this research, the process

under which it was conducted and offers suggestions for future research.

F. Definitions

Throughout this dissertation the terms indigenous, Indian, native, First Nation people, and aboriginal are used. This variety of uses falls under the umbrella concept of *indigenous* which refers to a race of people “who are endemic or native to a destination region. As such, this group may represent either the majority or a minority group in a destination” (Hinch & Butler, 1996, p. 9). The LRRC First Nation are an indigenous people and also a minority population in the Province of Alberta and Canada. During the research, members of the LRRC First Nation referred to themselves as either Indians, natives, indigenous people and in written documents as aboriginal and First Nation people. Given that there appears no objection or preference for a particular term by members of the LRRC that I spoke to, in this dissertation I will use the names, indigenous, native, aboriginal and First Nation interchangeably.

G. A Personal Note on Limitations

I began my research four years ago optimistic, enthusiastic, and to a certain extent naive. While I still feel optimistic and enthusiastic, those emotions have also been tempered by the realities of the research process and the complexities of conducting intercultural community based research. In the end, while I was able to address the research objectives established from the outset, I was unable to do so as systematically as I first intended. Yet, I believe this dissertation portrays an accurate assessment of the

LRRC's motivations for tourism development, the significant challenges facing the LRRC, and insight into the pursuit of sustainable native tourism development in the Caribou Mountains and perhaps other places within a similar context. These insights are based on interview data, my extensive field experiences in the Caribou Mountains, attendance at several council meetings, and meetings in Edmonton with LRRC First Nation advisors.

The research was initiated in the Fall of 1995 as I began inquiries with colleagues familiar with the Caribou Mountains and the LRRC's interest in tourism development. After two Summer field seasons and two Winter visits, one of which I accompanied a Cree trapper on his trap-line, the research project was suspended by advisors to the LRRC. I was not surprised by this halt to my research. For months, there had been discussions regarding the nature and scope of my research. While I was dismayed as to how complex and political the research process became within the LRRC First Nation community, I remained optimistic that I could still learn from this process.

Furthermore, I realized that tourism development at any level was complex (e.g., Hunter, 1995, Lane 1994) given numerous individuals representing a broad range of interests focusing on a singular process. Within this process some people would have more control than others. The LRRC, although one community, represented a diverse range of attitudes regarding the process of tourism development. As a researcher, I soon understood that I was witnessing the realities of tourism development firsthand.

CHAPTER TWO

THE LITTLE RED RIVER CREE FIRST NATION AND THE CARIBOU MOUNTAINS

In this chapter I will first present a brief historical and contemporary overview of the LRRC First Nation and then explore the emergence of this study and its geographical focus.

A. The Little Red River Cree First Nation

Treaty 8, signed at Lesser Slave Lake in 1899 “covered the traditional lands of the Cree and Dene of northern Alberta, northeastern British Columbia, northwestern Saskatchewan and the adjoining area of the Northwest Territories south of Great Slave Lake”(Price & Smith, 1993-1994, p. 52). Among the signatories to Treaty 8 at Fort Vermillion were Crees of the Tallcree band and another group of Cree Indians. It is the latter group, known collectively today as the Little Red River Cree First Nation that most likely compromised those natives from the Red River Post. This dissertation focuses upon this group of people.

According to the formal text of Treaty 8, native people including the LRRC in the region ceded their traditional lands to the Crown in exchange for a wide range of promises including the establishment of reserves. Reserve settlements, however, were not created for all native groups as the crown representative noted “Indians were not prepared

to make selections, we confined ourselves to an undertaking to have reserves and holdings set apart in the future, and the Indians were satisfied with the promise that this would be done when required”(Government of Canada, 1966, p. 7). As Treaty Commissioners noted, the natives were *averse* to being settled onto reserves. The commissioners believed the treaty would have been unsuccessful had the natives believed it was the Crown’s intention to force them to live on reserves.

More significant than issues related to the establishment of reserve settlements to the LRRC and other bands were other promises related to traditional pursuits. Treaty Commissioners noted the great concern exhibited among the native people regarding the curtailing of traditional activities and assured them that Treaty 8 would protect their traditional pursuits such as hunting, trapping and fishing. Given this great concern, Treaty 8 noted that “the Queen hereby agrees with the said Indians that they shall have right to pursue their usual vocations of hunting, trapping and fishing throughout the tract surrendered...subject to such regulations as may from time to time be made by the Government of the country...(Government of Canada, 1966, p. 12).

Protecting traditional livelihoods was essential to the LRRC and other Treaty 8 signatories. This concern has not abated and has continued to the modern era. In addition to the subsistence and trading value of furs, the land-based activities of hunting, fishing and trapping have also provided a medium through which the Elders teach cultural values to their young. For most of the twentieth century the Cree of the LRRC area continued a land-based lifestyle. Underwriting this way of life was a mixed economy based on the reliance of game and fur bearers for both subsistence and commercial purposes (Elias,

1995; McCormack, 1994). Other activities included occasional wage labour, craft production and government assistance (McCormack, 1994).

However, as McCormack remarks, “The structure of the mixed economy and the way of life it supported changed greatly in the 1950s and 1960s, in response to a major decline in the fur trade and the expansion into northern Canada of new industries, including forestry, commercial fishing, and mining”(McCormack, 1994, p. 24). The loss of income acquired through subsistence harvesting directly affected native people of the boreal forest and their ability to obtain implements used in subsistence production. Cash-poor and lacking job skills required by the emerging industries supporting the provincial and federal governments push for northern development, many native families began to converge on the reserve lands that had eventually been allocated to them under Treaty 8.

It was during this crucial post-war period of social and economic transformation that the LRRC communities of John D'Or, Fox Lake and Garden River took form as major Cree settlements populated by Cree families that formerly lived in small bush settlements. Garden River is the only LRRC community not designated as a reserve. The federal government assumed that Cree families would now support themselves by wage labour and possibly farming which would replace the traditional activities of hunting and trapping. Meanwhile, the provincial government introduced individual trapping areas which imposed new restrictions on the ability of Cree to govern their own trapping (McCormack, 1993). “They expected that natives would want to abandon the bush economy, considered to be primitive and unproductive, and become a new northern labour force” (McCormack, 1993, p. 99). Unfortunately, this did not work. The Cree

people continued to pursue traditional bush activities off-reserve for both their economic and cultural significance (McCormack, 1993).

In recent years, the LRRC have sought to regain control over their traditional lands and to build a new, viable economy. This undertaking is being directed by the Chief and Council of LRRC band now known as a First Nation. The Little Red River Cree First Nation's system of government is based on an elected Chief and Band Council, a form of government imposed by the *Indian Act*. Cassidy (1990) explains that band councils are a contradiction. "They are part of the Canadian governing framework, but they are also structural forms of aboriginal government" (p. 93). For the LRRC this means that the Elders continue to play a strong advisory role in band government. Management of band affairs is done through the portfolio system where individual councillors have direct responsibility over a specific program such as education, economic development and social welfare. For example, the LRRC fly-in fishing lodges located in the Caribou Mountains (discussed later in this chapter) are operated under the supervision of the band councillor responsible for economic development.

Assisting these councillors in their roles are a small cadre of non-native advisors whose previous background in either industry or government allows them a great deal of insight when working with external agencies and institutions. The LRRC place a great deal of responsibility in the hands of their non-native advisors who often act on their behalf. For example, Bill, a non-native advisor for the LRRC First Nation, was responsible for overseeing the research reported in this dissertation. In our first meeting, he explained the need for the LRRC to develop off-reserve opportunities that place them

on their traditional lands.

Because Indian reserves were intended to be stepping stones to assimilation (Elias, 1991; Friesen, 1987), the “right of access to resources off-reserve was never considered essential to the economic development of aboriginal communities” (Natcher, 1999). Accordingly, native communities such as the LRRC, found they had very little control or authority over lands which had traditionally provided for them. Without aboriginal title to these traditional lands, the LRRC were unable to regulate the development of their traditional lands by resource-based industries. Thus, the only lands the LRRC controlled -their reserves- did not meet their socio-economic needs while lands they had traditionally used for subsistence activities were being exploited by resource development industries such as forestry and oil and gas exploration.

In recent years, the LRRC First Nation have begun to re-assert their rights to access and control traditional lands. The LRRC are a very dynamic and pro-active political force, forging liaisons with both government and industry in the region. These links are based primarily on the LRRC First Nation’s desire for greater control over traditional lands (Sewepagaham, 1998) which is driven through the processes associated with economic development. Key to this capacity building are the development of effective and meaningful partnerships by the LRRC First Nation with industry, government and educational institutions and individual researchers. Partnerships between industry, governments, semi-autonomous governments and local citizen groups have signalled a movement from direct local and central government decision-making to shared decision-making responsibilities. This consultation process is particularly relevant

to First Nation communities across Canada engaged in disputes over public lands and their management (Wall, 1999). Unfortunately, the forming of these partnerships by the LRRC have largely been “motivated by [their] experience with both exploitative/destructive and exclusionary use practices within working landscapes, and with restrictive and exclusionary management practices within [Wood Buffalo National Park]” (Sewepagaham, 1998, p. 325-326).

Through partnerships, the LRRC have become heavily involved in decisions regarding their community and their traditional land. Partnerships also offer the LRRC a degree of flexibility, especially in moving to options that allow for greater economic development and control over traditional land. For example, the development of the Cooperative Management Agreement (CMA) between the LRRC, High Level Forest Products and the provincial and federal governments enabled the LRRC to acquire a significant measure of control over their traditional land in addition to integrating greater links between the market economy and their cultural traditions. With more control over their traditional land coupled with the knowledge that tourism development potential exists in the Caribou Mountains, the LRRC have begun to explore additional opportunities such as tourism development.

B. The LRRC and Tourism in the Caribou Mountains

The LRRC’s interest in tourism development emerged in the mid-1980s when they expressed a desire to pursue non-consumptive tourism activities on their traditional land in the Community Tourism Action Plan (CTAP) associated with the Alberta

government (Alberta Tourism, 1988; Little Red River Cree First Nation, 1988). CTAP was a provincial government initiative. While members of the LRRC could still continue their traditional pursuits of hunting and trapping, the self-determined CTAP objectives suggested a tourism industry based on activities related to wild-life viewing, hiking and participation in cultural experiences. The LRRC CTAP (1988) explained the need to refocus land-use in a portion of their traditional territory called the Caribou Mountains from unsustainable to sustainable use. In achieving this, the LRRC wished to create economic diversification among their communities and to create employment opportunities for their young people.

The Caribou Mountains (Figure 1) represent a significant portion of the LRRC's traditional territory. Located in north central Alberta, the Caribou Mountains are a unique sub-arctic boreal environment. An elevated saucer shaped plateau rising between 600 and 700 metres above the surrounding lowlands, this area hosts black spruce, alder, jack pine, and 73 species of lichen which provide sustenance to the endangered Woodland Caribou (de Vries, 1997). The land is also home to moose, wolves, black bear, and fox populations. Many bird species inhabit the region; the common and red-throated loon, and the red-necked grebe can be seen on every lake. A network of intermittent lakes and waterways characterise the Caribou Mountains as do numerous cut lines created in the 1970s during oil and gas exploration (Pratt & Urquhart, 1994). Also, fire disturbance has marked the Caribou Mountains leaving a landscape in various stages of vegetation regeneration.

In 1992, the LRRC purchased two fly-in fishing lodges in the Caribou Mountains

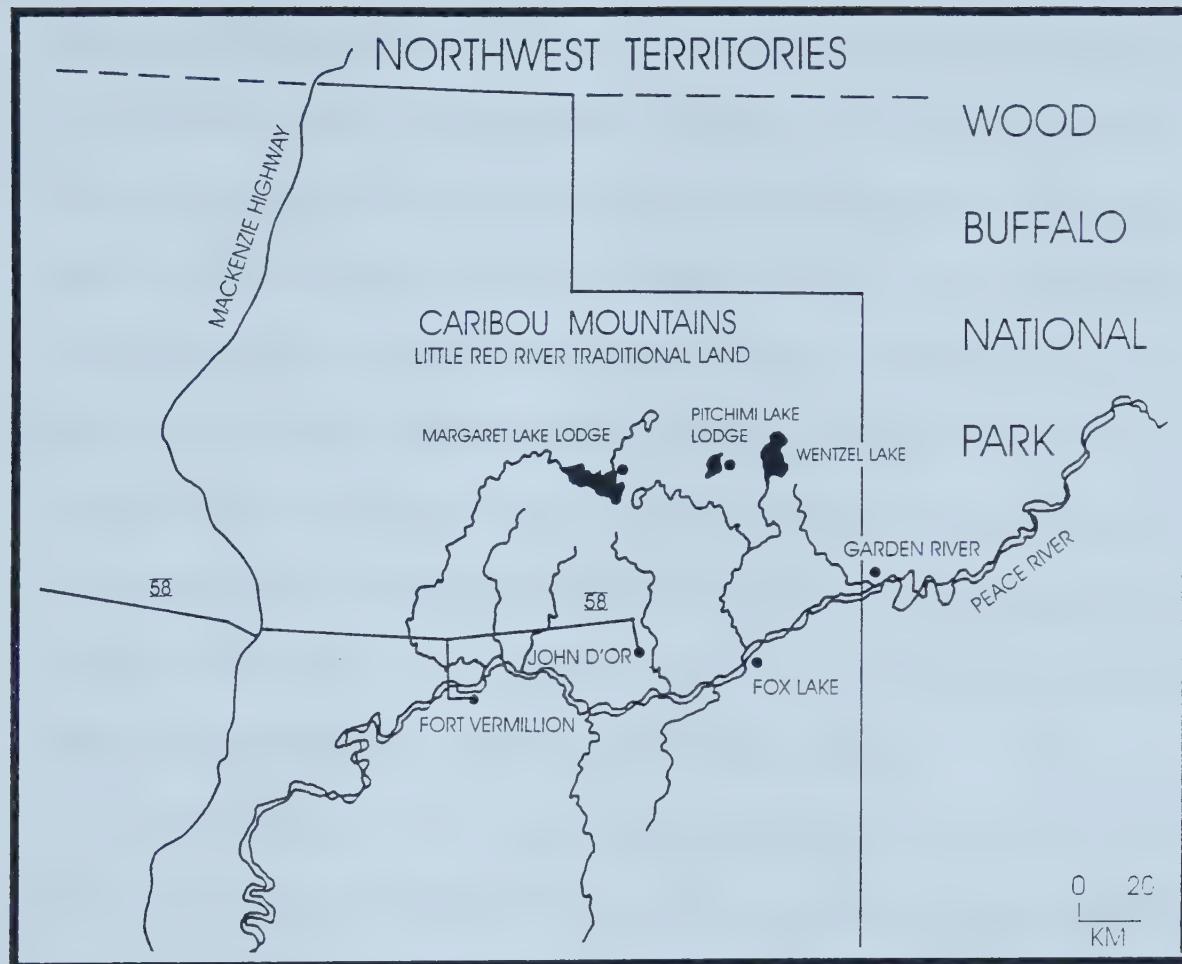


FIGURE 1
The Caribou Mountains

in a strategic investment in order to control recreation activities noted earlier in their CTAP objectives (Alberta Tourism, 1988). The larger of the two lodges was located on Margaret Lake, the largest lake in the Caribou Mountains, while the second lodge was located on Pitchimi Lake. In addition to these lodges, an outpost camp was developed at Wentzel Lake on the eastern edge of the Caribou Mountains. In the mid-1990s several trips were made to the Caribou Mountains by students from the University of Alberta for the purpose of bird watching. During this time, several students studying ecotourism in the Department of Renewable Resources noted the ecotourism development potential for the Caribou Mountains. Although the LRRC were informed of this potential, no further dialogue occurred regarding the pursuit of this development option.

When I began my Ph.D., I was interested in pursuing issues related to tourism development in the north. Although I had no specific geographic focus, my attention was soon drawn to the LRRC First Nation by faculty members of the Department of Renewable Resources at the University of Alberta. Through discussions with various individuals I learned of a native community in northern Alberta interested in exploring its potential for ecotourism development. This was a serendipitous event as I had been hoping to combine my professional background as an ecotourism guide with an academically focussed tourism study. I soon learned that members of the LRRC representing their newly acquired fishing lodges would be present at the Edmonton Sportsmen Show. It was at this event that I first introduced myself.

It was a rather awkward introduction in that I had had no previous contact with any members of the LRRC and therefore had no one to introduce me. Yet, they listened.

saying little, as I introduced myself both as a wilderness guide and academic researcher interested in exploring tourism development in the Caribou Mountains. Despite our limited exchange, one LRRC member took my phone number and promised to pass it on to the appropriate person. Following this introduction, I soon met an advisor of the LRRC and discussed the potential for the tourism study. I learned that the LRRC were indeed interested in exploring tourism development options for the Caribou Mountains. Following our brief meeting, I soon received a phone call inviting me to conduct tourism research in the Caribou Mountains the following summer. We discussed my potential research and agreed upon a series of research objectives. I agreed to provide the LRRC with tourism information such as brief market descriptions and a tourism opportunity assessment of the Caribou Mountains. Bill also advised me that to obtain official approval for the research I would have to make a brief presentation to the LRRC Chief and Council. He indicated that LRRC Elders would be attending this meeting as well and that their support was as important as that of the Chief and Council.

I nervously prepared for this meeting during which I was cautioned by Bill to avoid the use of academic jargon and to be honest and forthright. In addition to my brief presentation, several other researchers representing both the academic and private sectors were presenting as well. My presentation was brief and to the point. In it, I indicated that my experience spanned both the academic and professional spheres and that given this combination, I believed I could provide unique insight into the potential for tourism development in the Caribou Mountains. As I had already travelled to the Caribou Mountains for a brief visit, I recounted my first impressions for the Chief and Council.

Indeed the Caribou Mountains held promise for tourism development, I observed.

Tourists interested in nature and culture could potentially be attracted to the Caribou Mountains given appropriate planning and product development. As two lodges already existed, further costs related to infrastructure development would be reduced. However, I also noted the presence of garbage throughout my travels in the Caribou Mountains. I expressed concern that an inconsistent message would be given to potential tourists diminishing the ability to develop a sustainable tourism product. I stressed that my research would offer them insight into the planning for tourism development. I also indicated my ability to provide short working papers related to pragmatic issues such as training requirements, market information and product development.

During my discussion I would sometimes stop in order for my words to be translated into Cree for the Elders sitting around us. I wondered how my words were translated as a statement consisting of only several sentences would require a lengthy exchange between the Elders and the LRRC translator. I realized that the concept of tourism and its related issues had no direct translation into Cree. At the end of my presentation no questions were asked. I sat down wondering if I had obtained the consent required for the study. I was asked to leave the room and the council meeting continued in close session.

Eventually the meeting ended. I anxiously waited for official approval that I hoped would soon be forthcoming. An Elder shuffled over to me in moccasins and spoke briefly to me in Cree. Although I did not understand his words, I knew they were given in kindness. A member of the LRRC standing close to me noted that the Elder had told me

to be careful while in the Caribou Mountains and to watch for thin ice. Returning home with Bill, I asked how the meeting had gone and whether or not the LRRC had consented to the study. Bill words were to the point. He told me that as I had not been questioned I could assume that the LRRC consented to my research. Thus, consent for the research was granted verbally and did not involve a formal written statement of objectives. This was to create difficulties down the road. On a more important note, he indicated that the Elders present at the meeting trusted me as I had been honest. I had been honoured by the Elders, Bill continued, as they had been concerned for my safety. I had gained their consent.

Although the LRRC First Nation claim over 70,000 square kilometres of traditional land (Sewepagaham, 1997) encompassing portions of Wood Buffalo National Park, the Caribou Mountains, and portions along the Peace River adjacent to their communities, my study was focussed specifically in the Caribou Mountains. There are several underlying reasons for this. First, the fishing lodges owned by the LRRC can provide some of the necessary infrastructure required for tourism development. Second, members of the LRRC including their non-native advisors had been encouraged to explore the ecotourism and cultural tourism opportunities noted by visitors in the early 1990s. Third, although not noted explicitly, the Caribou Mountains allow the LRRC to contain tourism development to a specific area and to limit the amount of interaction between tourists and members of the LRRC communities. Fourth, tourism development in the Caribou Mountains enables the LRRC to re-assert control over portions of their traditional land. These issues are discussed in more depth in this dissertation as I explore

the LRRC's motivations for tourism development.

My research in the Caribou Mountains was formalized with the partnership agreement between the LRRC First Nation and the National Centres of Excellence on Sustainable Forest Management at the University of Alberta. Labelled as the Caribou Mountains Research Partnership (CMRP), its mandate was to coordinate research efforts in the Caribou Mountains centred on water quality, fisheries, vegetation mapping, and tourism development. Principles which continue to underlie this research agreement are the awareness and inclusion of TEK (Traditional Ecological Knowledge) and the transmission of data gathering and analysis techniques to the LRRC First Nation.

Since the development of their tourism plan in 1988, the LRRC have just begun to explore other tourism opportunities that reflect the goals articulated in their CTAP. Although they have purchased two sport fishing lodges in the Caribou Mountains that cater to a more consumptive pattern of use, the LRRC are continually exploring different options for tourism development that will ultimately lead to sustainable use of the Caribou Mountains. The LRRC's on-going desire to develop tourism in the Caribou Mountains provides an opportunity to gain more insight into the process of native tourism development from an academic as well as an applied perspective. To date, the literature on native tourism has not addressed the motivations for this type of development in depth nor has it thoroughly considered the issues and challenges associated with this type of development. This thesis addresses why the LRRC want to develop tourism on portions of their traditional lands and provides insights into processes associated with this pursuit.

CHAPTER THREE

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This review of literature is meant to develop an understanding of the relationships between the different types of tourism relevant to the LRRC in the context of the stated research objectives. The concept of sustainability, often seen to be consistent with the basic philosophies of indigenous people (Clarkson, Morissette, & Regallet, 1992), has been incorporated into emerging principles of tourism (Murphy, 1985; Boo, 1990). Ecotourism is a specific approach to sustainable tourism and it appears to be a promising model for native people because it offers the opportunity to blend both natural and cultural features in the development of a tourism product. The literature on indigenous tourism offers a perspective that advocates tourism development based on a culture theme. An examination of this literature underscores the need to further articulate: the factors that motivate native people to develop tourism, the challenges that native people will encounter in this process, and insight into the processes that native people can use in their pursuit of sustainable tourism development. First, it is necessary to explore the broader dimensions of tourism such as sustainable tourism, ecotourism and finally, indigenous tourism as all three perspectives offer insight into the LRRC First Nation's pursuit of tourism development. However, it is useful to briefly explain several development theories which have been used to conceptualize tourism.

A. Theories of Tourism

Tourism researchers have attempted to conceptualize tourism through several different theories. For example, theories of dependency (e.g., Grekin, 1994; Milne, 1998) and Butler's (1980, 1998) Tourism Area Life Cycle (TALC) have articulated the relationships between host communities and their guests and the industry at large. Dependency theory views underdevelopment as being attributable to external forces in which the core exploits the periphery. This dichotomy is often portrayed as an urban-rural relationship. Examples of dependency theory in relation to tourism are usually found in an international context (e.g., Nash, 1989; Britton, 1982) and are portrayed as a dualism between rich and poor, the northern or southern hemispheres and those who have control over their lives and those who do not. However, this theory can also be related to a regional context in which a marginal group is controlled by a dominant group. This would certainly apply to the relationship between indigenous and non-indigenous communities in Canada.

The TALC (Butler, 1980) specifically addresses the seven stages of tourism development (exploration, involvement, development, consolidation, stagnation, decline and rejuvenation) and was intended to model the growth stages of a tourism destination. Butler (1998) notes that the original concept was briefly described and has thus been open to a wide range of interpretations (e.g., Cooper & Jackson, 1989; Weaver, 1990). Dependency theory and the TALC suggest destination areas will become more reliant and subsumed by tourism's growth resulting in significant impacts to the host countries and their smaller communities. Examples of these impacts include resource depletion,

economic leakages, and commodification of indigenous cultures. In these conditions, it is unlikely that tourism can be developed sustainably. Both TALC and dependency theory conceive tourism as an agent of control and domination (Mowforth & Munt, 1998) and have been closely linked with the concept of mass tourism and its related impacts (Turner & Ash, 1975).

Tourism research and practice coupled with the emerging principle of sustainable development (WCED, 1987), have articulated new typologies of tourism that can, at least conceptually, break down the dependency relationship. Characterising these approaches are greater community participation and also an understanding of the carrying capacities of the natural, cultural, social and political environments. This evolution of tourism typologies and their reflection of new social, political and environment trends mirrors the advancement of the 'alternative development' theory (Friedman, 1992) which premises development on the basic needs of the community. Through a 'grass-roots' approach, the alternative theory conceptualizes development as a process which permits local people more control of their destiny. With more local control over political, social and economic processes, the potential for sustainable development is enhanced. The following review provides insight into these alternative forms of tourism and the ensuing discussion will then relate these insights to the case of the LRRC First Nation.

B. Sustainable Tourism Development

As many tourism researchers are inclined to observe, tourism is reported to be the fastest growing industry in the world (Eber, 1992; Aronsson, 1994). According to Hunter

(1997), tourism will likely become the largest sector of world trade in the next century. In the years between 1970 and 1990, for example, tourism revenues grew by roughly 300 percent, employing over 112 million people world wide. At the beginning of this decade tourism revenues were estimated at \$250 billion dollars and were expected to continue to grow (Scarce, Grifone & Usher, 1992).

Benefits of tourism development often include economic development in terms of employment creation and income generation leading to diversification of local economies (Mathieson & Wall, 1982). Other economic benefits might include greater infrastructure provision, the promotion of regional development and the broadening of the economic base of a community (Lea, 1997). This benefit would have particular relevance for single industry communities. It is these economic impacts which normally serve as the catalyst for tourism development.

However, it has been demonstrated on numerous occasions that there are also economic, social, cultural, and environmental costs associated with tourism development (e.g., Mathieson & Wall, 1982; Liu & Var, 1986; Pizan & Milman, 1986; Dogan, 1989). For example, environmental costs could include deforestation, negative impacts on vegetation and the disruption of animal behaviour such as breeding patterns (France, 1997). Of particular relevance to this research are the social and cultural costs of development. The decline of traditional beliefs and the strain placed on communities to be hospitable hosts are the social implications of tourism development (Mathieson & Wall, 1982; Ryan, 1991). The commodification of culture and the loss of authenticity are examples of cultural costs associated with tourism development. In efforts to mitigate

negative tourism impacts, planners have developed comprehensive rational tourism development strategies that endeavour to maximize the benefits and minimize the costs. In these strategies, attempts are made to redress the impacts of tourism and refocus the development so that positive outcomes, such as cultural revival or the fostering of environmental stewardship may arise. For this to occur, all stakeholders should be treated in a fair and equitable manner throughout the tourism development process.

Tourism planners, however, have often excluded one of the most important aspects of development: the community. Typologies of tourism development (e.g., Peck & Lepie, 1977; Pearce, 1983) have placed little emphasis on the community. Tourism development practices (see Kaiser & Helber, 1978; Lickorish, 1994) appear to be market oriented and driven by economic incentives. Critics of this approach (Butler, 1980; Mathieson & Wall, 1982; Murphy, 1985; Hunter, 1995) have argued that more emphasis should be placed on social and environmental factors and that the destination areas should be viewed in an organic and integrated way (Butler, 1980; Murphy, 1985; Inskeep, 1991).

An organic perspective views destination areas as a set of inter-related elements (Murphy, 1985): the community, the visitors, economic returns and the integrity of the resource, all must be balanced in order to maintain a sustainable tourism destination. Murphy (1985) advocates an ecological approach to tourism development borrowing from the concepts of ecosystem management. An ecosystem is "any area of nature that includes living organisms and non-living substances interacting to produce an exchange of materials between the living and non-living parts" (Odum, 1983, p. 262). By adopting this approach to tourism development, it is recognized that parts of the tourism system do

not act independently from one another. Rather, a symbiotic relationship exists, and if properly managed, can be sustained.

Inskeep's (1991) integrated approach to tourism development is based on incrementalism and a systems based approach. This revolutionary perspective, at least from within the field of tourism studies, demonstrated that an incremental and systems approach was predicated on the understanding that the development process was continuous and that the components of development often viewed as separate (e.g., Murphy, 1985) were, in fact, inter-related. The community, for example, was viewed as dynamic and capable of a large degree of participation in the decision-making process. Inskeep (1991) stressed the use of carrying capacity analysis for the sustainable use of natural environments. But while the recognition of community and the environmental carrying capacity of the natural resource utilized for tourism development certainly contributed to the dialogue on a sustainable approach to tourism development, the systems approach to planning appears to disregard all the other systems that are not tourism. Thus, rather than placing boundaries on a development process as a *systems* approach to development implies, a broader approach to sustainable tourism development may be wiser.

The concept of sustainable development evolved over a period of 25 years as a realization emerged among many people that the current development pattern was destroying not only areas of environmental significance, but ecological processes as well. If current development rates were left unchecked, the Club of Rome indicated in its *Limits to Growth* (Meadows, 1972), that the earth's ability to support itself and its

inhabitants would be in great jeopardy. Echoing these sentiments but also issuing a conceptual method by which to address the growing crisis, the *Brundtland Report* (WCED, 1987) operationalized the philosophy of sustainable development by defining it as “development that meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (WCED, 1987, p. 8). Court (1990) went one step further, believing that the present explication of sustainability focused too heavily on resource use from which the term had its applicable origins. He indicated that sustainable development should incorporate defining characteristics that support balanced community growth and prosperity.

Court (1990) argues that the goals of sustainable development should be moulded into a theoretical framework in order to maximize the likelihood that sustainable development will actually occur. He believes development must:

- grow from within and not be forced from the outside;
- be compatible with and restore environmental, economic, and cultural diversity, and rely on sustainable forms of resource use;
- provide the basic necessities of life and secure quality living conditions for all people, promote equity, and avoid unequal exchange;
- foster self-reliance, local control over resources, empowerment and participation by the under-privileged and marginalized, and provide opportunities for action that people feel is fulfilling;
- be peaceful both in the direct sense and in the structural sense; and
- allow for mistakes without endangering the integrity of the immediate ecosystem

and resource base (p. 135-136).

The concept of sustainable development is complex and can be described as a philosophy, a process, a plan, and a product (Wall, 1998). Discourse on sustainable development is often misunderstood because of the failure to identify what aspect of sustainable development is being discussed. On the other hand, it may be useful to consider sustainable development as an amalgamation of these parts as its outcome may depend on how these components inter-relate. For example, sustainable development as a philosophy refers to a desired future state achievable through an appropriate process which reflects tenets of sustainability. As a plan, specific steps are followed that implement both the philosophy and the process. The product is the final outcome which indicates the level of achievement (Wall, 1997).

Wall (1997) argues that rather than being employed as an analytical tool, the concept of sustainable development has been used, instead, for political purposes. Butcher (1997), in a harsh critique of sustainable development notes that the term lacks real meaning either for practitioners or academics engaged in sustainable development research and for the recipients of such an action. Instead, sustainable development appears to be a concept that is in vogue, represents a double standard from one society to the next depending on level of development, and is merely a set of principles that sound good but mean nothing. But despite these criticisms, the emerging and evolving issue of sustainable development has created a dialogue that must occur as it expands both philosophically and pragmatically our understanding of how tourism planning strategies must grow.

A sustainable tourism development philosophy represents a shift from traditional neoclassical economic approaches in tourism development to a more holistic approach, in which not only the needs of the market are considered but also the needs of the community and the natural environment. By adopting the principles of sustainable development, sustainable tourism "embodies a challenge to develop the world's tourism capacity and the qualities of its products without adversely affecting the environment that maintains and nurtures them" (Hawkes & Williams, 1993, p. V). There is a recognition that sustainable tourism should:

- operate within natural capacities for the regeneration and future productivity of natural resources;
- recognise the contribution that people and communities, customs and lifestyles make to the tourism experience;
- accept that these people must have an equitable share in the economic benefits of tourism; and
- be guided by the wishes of local people and communities in the host areas (Eber, 1992).

Tourism development incorporates the concept of sustainability by applying sustainable principles to tourism growth and management. These principles have been advocated in several sustainable tourism development models (e.g., Murphy, 1985; Inskeep, 1991; Dowling, 1993; Hunter, 1995) which collectively advocate a cooperative and collaborative sustainable tourism development process. In doing so, these principles serve as the foundation on which strategies are developed for sustainable tourism (Getz &

Jamal, 1994; Jamal & Getz, 1994). Sustainable development strategies are well prepared plans which enable communities and regions to increase their chances for successful tourism development. Common features of these strategies include:

- Development of strategy should encourage and facilitate an ongoing dialogue between business, government, communities and other interests.
- The strategy should protect the natural habitat, especially unique scenic areas.
- The strategy should encourage new entrepreneurial activities.
- Strategy-making should be considered as an ongoing education process.
- The production of a well researched plan, supported by the whole community, can be used as an effective tool for obtaining public sector funding (Lane, 1994, p. 105).

The concepts of sustainable development and sustainable tourism are appealing. However, there are several issues which need to be addressed. For example, communities are not homogenous (see Butler, 1993; Bramwell & Lane, 1995; Hunter, 1995). Instead, they are diverse and represent a number of different values and attitudes which will effect tourism planning. Supporters of tourism are most likely those people who stand to benefit from its development, such as those who own hotels, restaurants and other business related to servicing tourists. However, the support of those people not directly involved in tourism services may be marginal. While certainly not everyone in a community views themselves as hosts (Bramwell & Lane, 1995), it is important to include them in the tourism planning process as their lives may be impacted by this type of development. As a result, the marginal supporters of tourism may become more supportive simply because

their opinion was solicited.

Communities must also be cognizant of visitor expectations and in doing so must decide how best to use their tourism resources and promote their tourism product. While obtaining community involvement and meeting visitor expectations appear as daunting challenges in tourism development, they form an important step toward the goal of sustainability. Tourism development does not occur in isolation from other sectors of the economy. More frequently, it interacts with other industries such as forestry, mining, and oil and gas. This is the case in northern Alberta. Thus, while tourism may attempt to develop sustainably, it never can do so without the collaboration of other industries (Hunter, 1995, 1997). Communities that choose to develop tourism must be cognizant of other restrictions imposed on their surrounding natural region such as leases for mineral exploration or other types of development.

Despite these challenges, sustainable tourism development and the principles advocated by such an approach, appear to be more sympathetic to community interests than traditional tourism strategies. More specifically, the concepts of sustainable tourism development imply that local people should determine the type of development suitable for their region. In addition, the type of tourism experience developed should reflect the lifestyles and customs of the local people and their relationship to the natural environment. Based on these assumptions, tourism development may allow the LRRC First Nation an opportunity to develop a tourism product which addresses community needs and is reflective of their traditional relationship with the natural environment.

C. Ecotourism Development

Several forms of tourism have been discussed in recent years such as green tourism, alternative tourism, nature-based tourism, adventure tourism, and ecotourism (Weiller & Hall, 1992; Ewert, 1998; Fennell, 1999). However, ecotourism appears to be the most popular of these terms and it has been used widely if not always consistently. For example, ecotourism has been used to sell regions and tourism products despite an apparent lack of commitment to the principles which underlay the concept (Wight, 1993). Its use in product promotion exploits consumer desires to integrate their environmental values with travel, but frequently the products promoted under this label have failed to deliver on these promises. This shortcoming has led *The Ecotourism Society* to caution the public and encourage greater product research on the part of the consumer prior to making travel decisions (Hiller, 1991). Nevertheless, ecotourism has also promoted responsible development in natural areas around the world and has allowed many native societies to benefit by integrating their traditional lifestyles into the tourism experience (Boo, 1990).

The principles of ecotourism imply a development approach that minimizes the impact on the natural and socio-cultural environments. While there has been considerable debate as to ecotourism's potential to provide benefits to local communities and natural environments (e.g., Butler, 1990, 1991; Wheeler, 1991; Cater, 1994; Wight, 1995), there appears to be a growing consensus that ecotourism may prove beneficial in conceiving and developing nature-based tourism attractions (e.g., Boo, 1990; Duenkel & Scott, 1994; Hvenegaard, 1994).

Ecotourism has been defined as "tourism that involves travelling to relatively

undisturbed or uncontaminated natural areas with the specific object of studying, admiring, and enjoying the scenery and its wild plants, as well as any existing cultural aspects (both present and past) found in these areas" (Ceballos-Lascurian, 1991, p. 25). Through this type of interaction, the traveller becomes immersed in the natural and cultural environments which may lead to specific benefits for the destination and its people. However, this definition, although widely used in the tourism literature does not specifically imply benefits to the host regions. *The Ecotourism Society* (1991) has defined ecotourism more succinctly stating that "ecotourism is responsible travel to natural areas which conserves the environment and improves the welfare of local people" (p. 1).

Hvenegaard (1994) observes that ecotourism interest among academic, industry, and environmental groups, has been generated for two simple reasons: its potential for conservation and sustainable development, and its high rate of participation and economic impact. Consequently, ecotourism literature has tended to focus on selected areas: its potential for conservation and sustainable development (Valentine, 1991; Hummel, 1994; Goodwin, 1995), motivations of ecotourists (Eagles, 1992), economic impact of ecotourism (Maille & Mendelsohn, 1993; Steele, 1995), conceptual papers discussing the definitions of ecotourism (Hvenegaard, 1994; Wight, 1995), critiques of ecotourism (Wheeler, 1991; Wight, 1993), and links between ecotourism and environmentalism (Duenkel & Scott, 1994).

Increased conservation of natural resources has been associated with the development of ecotourism. Hummell (1994) illustrates this by providing examples of tourism development from Costa Rica, Nepal, and Kenya. Island nations of the South Pacific

have also seen recent development in conservation as a result of ecotourism (Valentine, 1991). These countries have begun to understand that their natural resources are more valuable in the long term if left untouched by resource extraction. In Kenya for example, it has been estimated that adult male lions are worth \$515,000 in foreign exchange earnings over their life span when protected as tourism attractions for ecotourists as opposed to their much lower value for hunting (Aveling & Wilson, 1992).

The conservation of bird species is also enhanced by ecotourism since bird-watching is a primary motivation for many ecotourists (Eagles, 1992). In Ontario's Point Pelee National Park, the avid interest of bird watchers has generated \$6.3 million in annual net economic earnings to the adjacent community (Butler & Fenton, 1987). Across North America, bird-watching expenditures have been estimated to be more than \$20 billion annually (Scare et al., 1991). The economic impact of ecotourism and its link to conservation has been illustrated by several studies (e.g., Tobias & Mendelsohn, 1991; Maille & Mendelsohn, 1993; Goodwin, 1995). This research has demonstrated the value of the tropical rain forest in Costa Rica and the natural regions of Madagascar thus providing a valuable link between the concept of sustainable resource consumption and ecotourism.

Local communities like those of the LRRC First Nation, can also benefit from ecotourism by improving economic, social, and/or cultural conditions. Some of these benefits include: local employment which utilises traditional knowledge, foreign exchange earnings, economic diversification, infrastructure improvements, and inter-cultural understanding (Linberg, 1991; McNeely & Thorsell, 1989). Benefits that might accrue on a larger scale may include the protection of watersheds, and protection of biodiversity and

evolutionary processes (Sherman & Dixon, 1991). Communities pursuing ecotourism development can:

- create a variety of employment opportunities that draw upon the expertise of local people;
- contribute to diversifying the economic base of the community;
- assist in the long-term conservation of natural areas that have cultural value;
- offer an effective means of revitalising local arts and traditions, or lead to their protection; and
- encourage local communities to value, and benefit from, natural and cultural assets (Boo, 1990).

Despite these benefits, there are costs associated with ecotourism development.

Overcrowding, over development, pollution, wildlife disturbances, and increased vehicle use are some of the more common pitfalls of ecotourism (Boo, 1990). Local communities may also be negatively impacted which might be demonstrated by changes in individual behaviour, changes in community values because of increased interaction with ecotourists, the diversion of resources and the commodification of local culture (Mathieson & Wall, 1982; Butler, 1990; Boo, 1990). Nevertheless, if ecotourism is premised on the needs of the community and formulated into an appropriate plan, many costs associated with development can be mitigated.

However, in the context of native tourism development, ecotourism may not be the appropriate model as it advocates experiences often viewed as non-consumptive (Hinch, 1998). For example, hiking and wild-life viewing are generally perceived as non-

consumptive activities. On the other hand, hunting and trapping are generally not considered ecotourism experiences because of their consumptive use of wild-life. However, these activities are common to many native people throughout the world who wish to pursue ecotourism development. As a result, native people may either have to conform to the ideals of ecotourism or choose to develop a form of tourism more consistent with their culture. The LRRC First Nation may, for example, ultimately decide to develop a tourism product that is nature-based but also reflects their traditional activities in the wilderness such as trapping and hunting. Thus, while specific principles which underlie the concept of ecotourism may support a form of indigenous tourism development, other principles may contradict traditional activities that are consumptive in nature.

Of greater significance to ecotourism development and its relationship to indigenous people, however, is the issue of control. “For tourism development to be successful, aboriginal people must be allowed to take control of it despite the political and social forces that often work against them” (Fennell, 1999, p. 226). Greater control would permit the development of a tourism product which would see the benefits going to the local community rather than to outside groups. Controlling the development of tourism might also facilitate changes in other dimensions of an indigenous community. On the other hand, by developing a tourism product, indigenous people may bring more control to their community through accessing their traditional land and gaining greater economic independence. Examining the indigenous tourism literature is necessary in order to gain a greater appreciation of the LRRC’s pursuit of tourism development.

D. Native Tourism Development

Native tourism has become increasingly popular given the desire by many people to see and to experience native cultures (Hinch & Butler, 1996). Literature on indigenous based tourism, although limited, reflects this pattern (e.g. Tighe, 1985; Cohen, 1979, 1989; Zeppel & Hall, 1991). While the desire to experience other cultures is not a new phenomena and can be traced back to the origins of tourism (Graburn, 1977), the current trend in indigenous tourism appears to have roots in more contemporary issues (Hinch & Butler, 1996).

For example, the tourism industry generally appears to be more sensitive to issues of environmental sustainability and cultural survival as can be witnessed by the emergence of alternative forms of tourism such as ecotourism (Boo, 1990; Fennell, 1999). However, these alternative forms of tourism development appear ethnocentric and often preclude traditional and current lifestyles of native people and how they may be integrated into tourism development. The following discussion highlights these issues by giving particlar attention to: 1) the motivations for native tourism development, 2) the challenges of this type of development, and 3) an examination of indigenous tourism frameworks and the insight such models provide into the development process.

a) Factors Motivating Native Tourism Development

An objective of this study is to explore the motivations for tourism development by the LRRC First Nation. As motivations for tourism development among indigenous people are poorly understood, insight can be provided through this research. Motivations for tourism development have typically been based on economic progress (Mathieson & Wall,

1982). Tourism development has the potential to create jobs and diversify local, regional, and national economies and has therefore been viewed by many communities as an alternative to other forms of development (Murphy, 1985). Like other communities, native groups are motivated to develop tourism because of economic incentives such as job creation and economic diversification. In this way, tourism has the possibility of creating a higher degree of economic independence which can lead to greater self-determination, hence a resurgence in cultural pride (Hinch & Butler, 1996; de Burlo, 1996). However, it should not be assumed that economic aspects are the only motivators for tourism development. As de Burlo (1996, p. 256) indicates, “indigenous cultural values and sense of history may also play a significant role in the involvement of indigenous people in ethnic tourism.”

Unfortunately, the tourism literature has not verified this claim and as a result, little is known about these other motivating factors of native tourism development.

While literature on native-based tourism may not highlight these factors, literature in the field of native studies has offered insight. For instance, Elias (1991) has observed that the role of the Elders in Canadian native societies is diminishing. Whereas young people once respected and venerated the Elders as repositories of valuable knowledge and skills, the values of youth are now based on another system which views the traditional wisdom of the Elders as unnecessary in the modern world.

Native people throughout the world are in danger of losing access to their traditional lands. Fifteen years ago the Haida Nation of the Queen Charlotte Islands, British Columbia were in jeopardy of losing their traditional land to the forest industry (Island Protection Society, 1984; Guujaaw, 1996). To address this concern, the Haida established a system of

watchmen situated on key islands in the South Moresby area to monitor visitors to the region. In addition, a small tourism company owned and operated by the Haida began offering tours in South Moresby. When the South Moresby region was later declared a National Preserve, the Haida were given joint management responsibilities and allowed to continue traditional harvesting practices. By maintaining their presence through activities linked to tourism, the Haida were able to keep control over their native land (Guujaaw, 1996). Would native tourism development allow the LRRC First Nation to strengthen their claim to the Caribou Mountains as their traditional land?

b) Issues and Challenges of Native Tourism Development

The second objective of this study is to understand the issues and challenges associated with traditional activity-based products such as wild-life trapping by the LRRC First Nation. As many challenges exist, this section focuses on three specific issues that are inherent to native tourism development: commodification, ecotourism versus indigenous tourism, and host/guest relationships.

1. Commodification

The first issue relates to the concept of *commoditization* which Cohen (1988, p. 380) defined as:

a process by which things (and activities) come to be evaluated primarily in terms of their exchange value in a context of trade, thereby becoming goods (and services); developed exchange systems

in which the exchange value of things (and activities) is stated in terms of prices...

Critics of tourism have argued that the very essence of the cultural attraction is likely to be destroyed as it loses its original significance in the host culture through the process of commoditization and simply becomes an economic activity devoid of any deeper meaning (Boorstin, 1964; Greenwood, 1989; Urry, 1990). This argument serves as the essence of a series of articles under the theme of “breaking out of the tourist trap” in two 1990 issues of the *Cultural Survival Quarterly Journal* (Johnston, 1990). Alternatively, it has been suggested that commoditization is a process which is not inherently destructive but which has to be managed carefully to ensure that the desired impacts are achieved (Hinch & Li, 1994). Cohen (1988, p. 371) reflects a similar view by stating that “commoditization does not necessarily destroy the meaning of cultural products, although it may change it or add new meaning to old ones.” Active intervention into this process can, therefore, provide an opportunity to manage the nature of tourism consumption and its impacts.

Boorstin (1964) argues that tourists are motivated by the strange and unknown. They desire the authentic (MacCannell, 1976) and expect to view the exotic and primitive customs of the “other.” MacCannell (1976) relates this drive for authenticity in tourism as similar to visitor expectations in museums of modern man, in which primitive life is put on display, encapsulated in time. As a result of this phenomena, the native becomes stereotyped into a past role regardless of the changes in their lifestyle due to modernization and assimilation in Western society. Finding a balance between contemporary and traditional tourism products therefore becomes an issue for indigenous people.

Berkhoffer (1978, p. 3) writes “Native Americans were and are real, but the *Indian* was a [White] invention and still largely a [White] image, if not a stereotype.” This concept poses a significant challenge to native communities desiring to pursue tourism development. While some native communities may choose to market aspects of their culture in response to market demand, others may choose to forgo that opportunity and opt to develop a form of tourism more consistent with their contemporary lifestyles but integrated with traditional values. For those communities that choose the latter as a development alternative, the tourism product will require careful planning and an innovative marketing strategy in order to encourage people to experience the culture of contemporary native people versus the stereotypical image often portrayed.

Directing visitor demand to carefully developed products, such as a tour package associated with a native trap-line, would seem to provide a point of control for tourism in which the positive benefits can be captured and the costs minimized. To the extent that the control of these types of developments is retained at a local level, native communities would have considerable influence over the nature of the impacts. This control is consistent with the call for self-government for indigenous people in Canada (Elias, 1995) and throughout the world. Under this approach, native people would, at least in theory, be in a position to employ the principles of sustainable development, a philosophy which is consistent with many indigenous societies (Clarkson, Morissette, & Regallet, 1992). Despite the relevance of this academic debate, an underlying question remains as to how potential native hosts view commoditization from their own perspective.

2. Ecotourism versus Indigenous Tourism

Earlier in this chapter, a broad perspective on ecotourism was articulated with a concluding discussion on the paradox between the tenets of ecotourism and the traditional consumptive lifestyle of native people. This section expands this discussion by focussing on the conflicting environmental values of tourists seeking an ecotourism experience versus those seeking an indigenous tourism experience.

While the popular concept of ecotourism focuses on the natural resource base, it also stresses the significance of indigenous peoples and cultures (Boo, 1990; Fennell, 1999). This emphasis is reversed under indigenous tourism with the cultural setting receiving priority although the relationship between culture and nature is complicated somewhat by the greater integration of nature and culture within a holistic indigenous framework (Hollinshead, 1992). It is not surprising therefore that nature based tourism is a very prevalent feature of indigenous developments especially in view of their control over peripheral lands that are increasingly valued for their natural features (Hinch & Butler, 1996).

Given this overlap in terms of the importance of the natural environment under both of these broad categorizations of tourism and given the high profile of ecotourism, indigenous tourism developers have attempted to capitalize on emerging ecotourism markets. In many cases this blend of ecotourism and indigenous tourism may result in the desired synergistic benefits but the consumptive nature of many traditional activities like wildlife trapping and hunting presents unique challenges. Although ecotourists and indigenous hosts have both been described as having ecocentric world views in which humankind is seen as one part of the broader ecosystem rather than its master (Hinch, 1998),

these values appear to be manifest in distinctly different ways.

Even in cases where traditional knowledge and western based scientific study provide evidence of the sustainability of indigenous hunting and trapping, these activities would seem to be far removed from the activity preferences of most ecotourists. For example, whale watching has become a popular ecotourism pursuit while whale hunting or watching whale hunting would be the antithesis of ecotourism (Ris, 1993). Studies of tourism in Canada's north suggest that these different perspectives of wildlife hunting present fertile grounds for conflict between hosts and guests (Johnston, 1995; Wenzel, 1991). As a result of these differences, it would appear that rather than representing a primary market for indigenous tourism operators, ecotourists at least in the context of consumptive activities like trap-line tourism, would be a relatively small market. Clearly, the attractiveness of trap-line tourism, to ecotourists will, in part, depend on how it is positioned by indigenous hosts in their marketing activities and how effective interpretive programs are in helping visitors to accept the differing cultural perspective's of the hosts. For these management strategies to be initiated, however, a greater understanding is needed of the differences between the views of indigenous hosts and potential ecotourism visitors in relation to these consumptive activities.

3. Host and Guest Relationships

At the heart of this issue is the fact that indigenous tourism is generally a cross-cultural phenomenon involving the interaction of peoples with differing value sets and understandings (Berno, 1996; Hollinshead, 1992; Smith, 1989). Of course there are positive

outcomes from cross-cultural interaction such as the development of positive attitudes about each other, and the diminishing of negative stereotypes. On the other hand, negative outcomes might arise through the clash of cultural values or the feelings of inferiority and superiority (Reisinger, 1994).

Indigenous guides and hosts have a critical role to play in the outcome of the visitor's cultural experience (Gurung, Simmons, & Devlin, 1996) but a lack of experience and skill development in this area can make it difficult to meet client expectations (Haywood, 1991). Beyond these hospitality-training issues, some fundamental questions remain. At what point do differences between hosts and guest expectation and behaviors reflect the essence of their respective cultures rather than the inexperience of the trapper hosts within the tourism industry or the unrealistic expectations of non-indigenous visitors? More immediately, how receptive are the visitors and hosts likely to be toward these differences?

Cross-cultural differences between hosts and guests and the subsequent implications has received considerable attention in literature related to tourism (e.g., de Burlo, 1996; Dagnal-Myron, 1990; Evans-Pritchard, 1989; Laxson, 1991; Sweet, 1990). Because of the general lack of hospitality skills, and other job skills (Cornall & Kalt, 1992) which is reflective of the overall marginal status of indigenous peoples, the potential for sustainable native tourism development is oftentimes uncertain. However, many native communities have taken greater control of the interaction process between hosts and guests, and have therefore, been able to mitigate, to a certain extent, the negative impacts related to cross-cultural interaction. For instance, in South Pentecost, Vanuatu, the Sa people have

vigorously protected their culture from tourists by establishing clear guidelines for tourist behavior (de Burlo, 1996). In a similar vein, native communities in the Southwest, United States, have set rules for tourist conduct (Evans-Pritchard, 1989; Sweet, 1990) that are in some cases enforced by tribal police (Dagnal-Myron, 1990).

The success of native tourism development and the issue of native hospitality and service will largely depend on when, and how cross-cultural education is implemented. In the case of native tourism products, such as trap-line tourism, this cross-cultural education will have to reflect the realities of the actual tourism experience. It may be necessary in the early development of marketing strategies to explore just how this reality can be reflected in tourism brochures and other media. In terms of skill development for the indigenous hosts, native communities may need to seek assistance in developing a training program from tourism professionals. While cross-cultural education and service related skill development may not always be the answer to specific issues related to host/guest interactions, it is these types of practices that may lead to greater success for native tourism development. Although only three issues were highlighted in this section, it is evident that tourism development will pose an array of challenges that must be negotiated in order for it to occur successfully. Before these obstacles to development can be overcome, they must first be recognized and discussed by the individuals in the community pursuing tourism development.

c) Native Sustainable Tourism Development

The third objective of this research is to develop insight into the processes associated with the pursuit of sustainable native tourism development. This type of development has

been advocated by scholars in native studies (Cornell & Kalt, 1992; Elias, 1991) and tourism (de Burlo, 1996; Keller, 1987), and implies an integration of both traditional and contemporary values in developing tourism. Nevertheless the developers of native tourism must also be cognizant of visitor expectations and be prepared to integrate this understanding into developing a tourism product. In doing so, it should be recognized that unavoidable tradeoffs may exist, therefore, tourism development requires careful planning and management.

Several tourism researchers (e.g., Smith, 1989, 1996; Sofield & Birtles, 1996) have illustrated processes that enable native communities to assess their chances for successful tourism development. Smith's Four H's signify key elements, that when combined and built upon, can be considered as the basic tourism assets in the development process. These elements are habitat, heritage, history and handicrafts. This model implies that an understanding and integration of these four elements may lead to a successful tourism product. The 4 H's model is descriptive, however, and is not designed as a tool that can be utilized in the actual process of tourism development. Rather, its strength is its ability to inform tourism academics and professionals of the attributes needed for tourism development in native communities.

Sofield and Birtle's (1996) "Indigenous People's Cultural Opportunity Spectrum" (IPCOST) differs from Smith's (1996) model in that it is offered as a tool for native communities to assess themselves. Based largely on the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (Clarke & Stankey 1979) and the Tourism Opportunity Spectrum (Butler & Waldbrook, 1991), IPCOST establishes a mechanism for the community to:

- catalogue its culture in terms of opportunities for tourism;
- carry out its own assessment of its capacity to undertake development;
- decide whether it should proceed into cultural tourism; and
- decide which particular options represent the best opportunities to pursue according to a range of cultural and social values as well as economic considerations.

IPCOST provides a means by which native communities can carry out their own assessment and as Sofield and Birtle (1996, p. 419) observe, IPCOST can “be applied not only to an individual community but to a region inhabited by several communities of indigenous people.” Furthermore, IPCOST implies that native communities should examine their own limitations in developing tourism and decide if these challenges can be overcome.

Both IPCOST (Sofield & Birtles, 1996) and Smith’s (1996) 4 H’s provide descriptive frameworks for native tourism development. Yet, both models can be criticised as ethnocentric and perhaps even paternalistic in their development. For example, IPCOST is based on the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (Clarke & Stankey, 1979) and the Tourism Opportunity Spectrum (Butler & Waldbrook, 1991); frameworks that allow tourism scholars insight into recreation and tourism settings and preferences. In addition, while the Four H’s provide an initial framework to examine the opportunities for native tourism development, it continues to perpetuate an ethnocentric outlook by defining what non-natives perceive as appropriate elements in development. Native cultures are both diverse and dynamic (Hollinshead, 1992). Many native people do share similar values and traditions, but “they do not share the same culture” (Hinch & Butler, 1996). It is likely that native people have had very little control in how these frameworks have been developed.

Other development frameworks, while not focussed exclusively on native communities offer insight into possible development strategies. For example, Early American Landscapes (EALs) is offered as a plan (Bruns & Stokowski, 1996) that incorporates landscapes with rural tradition and culture. Underlying the relationship between landscape and culture is the theoretical concept of “sense of place” which intertwines both land and people and the concept of sustainability which recognizes the interdependence of the biophysical and socio-cultural systems. From this premise, a 9 step plan articulates an approach to development that includes for example, a visioning process within the community and other steps related to marketing, financing and evaluating. This approach to sustainable development for recreation and tourism activities while offering insight, suggests that communities want to retain their unique or early American character. From a native tourism development perspective, the concept of EALs implies a desire to retain or recapture an earlier more *authentic* native existence when it may be that native communities want nothing more than an opportunity to modernize their reserve communities in order to attain the standard of living that most people in North America enjoy.

These frameworks (Smith, 1996; Sofield & Birtle, 1996; Bruns & Stokowski, 1996) offer insight into native tourism development. Additional insights are provided in the reviews of sustainable tourism and ecotourism earlier in this chapter. Collectively, what these discussions imply are that sustainable native indigenous tourism should be premised on the needs of the local community and that in order to be sustainable, development must include additional sectors of the economy. For native communities to successfully develop tourism, a recognition and inclusion of their contemporary and traditional culture is essential

(Cornell & Kalt, 1992). In order for this to occur, native communities must be in control and be able to exert their power in the process of tourism development (Zeppel, 1998).

E. Discussion

In this review of literature, two themes emerged; the role of the community in tourism development, and the concept of sustainability. These issues linked the discussions regarding sustainable tourism, ecotourism and indigenous tourism. Development strategies were then articulated within each of these tourism typologies. A common tenet of sustainable tourism strategies stipulates that tourism should both benefit and be guided by the wishes of local people. However, if one accepts Hunter's (1995; 1997) argument that tourism development should occur within a broader context in order to achieve a degree of sustainability, then one can assume that all development should be guided by the wishes of local people. In fact, discussing sustainable tourism development without considering the role of the community and other economic sectors becomes a pointless exercise as Butler (1998) observes that for "sustainable development to be developed irrespective of whether other interrelated segments are to be sustained or not is inappropriate and contradictory" (p. 29). In order for development to be sustainable, it should then be based on a very specific regional and community context that reflects an understanding of the community's diversity but also their shared beliefs and aspirations.

However, if communities are to effect sustainable tourism through a broader approach, these communities must have the power and the control to do so. Lacking this control, it is doubtful that the goals of sustainability can be achieved on any level. The role

of community power and control in the development of tourism has received increasing attention (e.g., Fennell, 1998; Zeppel, 1998; Mowforth & Munt, 1997; Hall, 1994; Keller, 1987; Britton, 1982). More and more researchers (e.g., Milne, 1998; Zeppel, 1998) are noting the importance of community control in the tourism development process. In fact, Zeppel (1998) argues that control is an essential ingredient for sustainable native tourism development.

Power and control can be conceived on two levels. On one level, the concepts are abstract in nature but carry a significant weight in the way they are played out among actors in the development process. For example, through the power of dominant ideology and discourse (Mowforth & Munt, 1998), concepts such as sustainability and environmentalism are imposed on cultures who may define these concepts differently. Trap-line tours, for instance, and the practice of trapping, while considered a sustainable activity by the LRRC, might be perceived very differently by tourists. That the LRRC First Nation and other indigenous communities across Canada must consider whether or not their culture will play a role in tourism development is also a form of control (Mowforth & Munt, 1998) since most native communities are well aware that tourists want to see and experience ‘traditional’ native culture.

At another level, power and control can be considered as tangible assets. Hall (1994) defines power as “including the ownership of land, financial sourcing, input from local people, and the relations of local traditions to tourism development” (p. 53). Peck and Lepie (1989), in their tourism development research among North Carolina communities, observed that local power among the stakeholders positively influenced the type and magnitude of

tourism impacts in the host destinations. Lacking the power to control the scale and nature of tourism development, communities and even regions may suffer from a number of impacts.

Britton (1982) examined the issue of control, or lack thereof, in the context of Less Developed Countries (LDCs). He noted that tourism, like colonialism creates a relationship of dependency of the LDCs on the countries of origin and foreign companies. Internal power over economic, political and social systems is eroded. In the case of tourism, this could arise from the development of large resorts owned and operated by foreign nationals. Because many LDCs are unable to supply the goods and services these resorts require through local production, LDCs are forced to import these goods and services from developed nations. This will often come at the expense of essential supplies needed by local people (Britton, 1982). In this type of relationship, control is removed from the local people and placed into the hands of tourists, the governments of developed nations and foreign industries, all of whom, in one form or another, exert their power over these LDCs.

Keller (1987) examined the issue of control from within a core-periphery framework. Briefly, this dependency framework views the process of development as occurring between a core region characterised by high growth potential and a periphery region or marginalized region characterised by low or depleted resource- based economies. Christaller (1966), the first to apply this concept to tourism, examined tourist flows as a movement from core to periphery regions. Keller (1987) characterises the periphery as “the playground for exogenous investors, and the peripheral government an observer of its own fate” (p. 25). In this relationship, decision-making is in the hands of outside forces. The Northwest

Territories (NWT), as Keller (1987) observed, provided an example of a peripheral region that lacked local decision-making control as the core was dominated by international players who had a high degree of influence in shaping the tourism industry. To change this, Keller (1987) recommended that stakeholders in the NWT gain control over the decision-making process. In doing so, development could reflect the available human resources, the capacity of the natural resources to accommodate development, available capital, and the degree to which a cultural focus exists.

The concepts of power and control and the dependency perspective can equally be applied to indigenous communities such as the LRRC First Nation. The LRRC are in both a dependent and peripheral relationship with industry; which desires the raw materials on their traditional land (Sewepagaham, 1998), the provincial and federal governments; that are responsible for developing regulations that control their rights to hunt, trap, fish, and, the tourism industry, which compels native communities to consider whether they should or should not put their culture on display. Given these conditions, it may prove difficult for the LRRC to affect sustainable tourism development on their traditional land.

Because tourism is often viewed as a community development tool (Clements, Schultze & Lime, 1993) it must satisfy the needs of a number of different stakeholders in and outside the community. In addition, by including a broad range of stakeholders, the likelihood of achieving sustainable development is enhanced as partnerships are formed among the different stakeholders. Partnerships have been defined as “an on-going arrangement between two or more parties, based upon satisfying specifically identified, mutual needs. Such partnerships are characterised by durability over time, inclusiveness,

cooperation, and flexibility" (Uhlik, 1995, p. 14). For First Nation communities, partnerships are becoming a common method of doing business (Anderson, 1995; Elias, 1995) as these alliances between industry and governments allow indigenous people a place in the decision-making processes that affect, for example, the use of resources on traditional lands. Partnerships, have therefore, facilitated two things in regards to tourism development among First Nation communities; they have facilitated greater control over decision-making regarding traditional resources and they have broadened the number of players included in the discussion of tourism development. Thus, achieving sustainable development becomes a greater possibility as these inclusive processes are utilized.

What perspective is then appropriate to describe tourism development premised on cooperation among a number of stakeholders? Dependency theory makes no allowance for human agency in contrast to the alternative development paradigm. However, while the alternative development model suggests that development must focus on basic community needs and facilitate greater community control, as Wall (1997) observes, the concept is too vague to be of much use. Anderson (1995), developed the 'contingency perspective', based on economic development research in native communities in Saskatchewan. This theory recognizes the need for First Nation communities to link with other sectors of the economy to achieve their broader goals. Given the LRRC First Nation's desire to develop a form of sustainable tourism and the fact that they have entered into a number of partnerships which offer them a degree of control over decisions affecting their traditional land, the contingency perspective may offer significant insight into this strategy of development. This discussion will continue at a later point in this dissertation.

F. Conclusion

In this literature review and the ensuing discussion it has been demonstrated that the field of tourism inclusive of specific types such as ecotourism and indigenous tourism is indeed, dynamic. Key issues emphasized included: the role of the community, the tenets of sustainable development and their relationship to sustainable tourism, ecotourism, and indigenous tourism. It was noted, for example, that while ecotourism may provide a valuable framework for development, it might not be suited for many native communities as it implies activities not necessarily consistent with native cultures. This was viewed as a significant issue in addition to the challenges related to commodification and host/guest relationships. An issue that the tourism literature did not adequately address in the context of native tourism development concerned their motives for tourism development in the first place.

Economic development is often cited as one such motive, but clearly other motives exist that relate to social, cultural, political and environmental issues.

The discussion explored these issues further by focussing specifically on sustainable development and the role that community control has in effecting this type of development. It was noted that community control was an essential ingredient in developing sustainable tourism especially if this development was supported by a number of stakeholders outside of the tourism industry. Partnerships were discussed as a useful method for facilitating discussions between stakeholders and while both the alternative and dependency theory did not offer significant insight into this development process, the contingency perspective (Anderson, 1995) may.

The literature review has provided significant insight into the search for sustainable tourism development in the Caribou Mountains by the LRRC First Nation, but a substantial gap exists. The study of the initial stages of tourism development by the LRRC First Nation can provide this insight into the issues associated with native tourism development in terms of their motivations, the challenges they may encounter, and the strategies they employ to effect sustainable development.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH APPROACH AND METHODS

This chapter focuses on both the research approach underlying the study and the specific methods used in the study. In addition, I will discuss the nature of the fieldwork and the research objectives of each field season.

A. Research Approach

Researchers working in native communities have often failed to recognise the inappropriateness of their research methods given the intercultural context of their study (Berno, 1996). Thus, the outcomes of many studies have tended to reflect a Western based perspective rather than a cross-cultural perspective. It is therefore not surprising that many native people believe most research conducted in their communities has contributed little to the economic, political and cultural problems which they face (Elias, 1995). For intercultural research to offer insight to both the researcher and the specific community, researchers must seek to better understand the cultural context in which their study occurs. Understanding, for example, the concept of Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) offers the researcher more insight into indigenous cultures.

Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) is a form of indigenous knowledge generated through many generations of close contact with the natural environment and is both cumulative and dynamic (Johnson, 1992). TEK encompasses environmental and socio-economic awareness that is based on past and present experience. Native people are

beginning to demand that studies being conducted within their communities integrate elements of TEK. This demand emerged in response to early ethnographic studies conducted by anthropologists in which the academic data were often at odds with local knowledge. Johnson (1992, p. 7) has argued that traditional knowledge is developed differently from scientific knowledge and that researchers should be cognizant of these differences. Key differences include:

- TEK is recorded and transmitted through oral tradition; Western science employs the written record.
- TEK is learned through observation and hands-on experience; Western science is taught and learned in a situation usually abstracted from the applied context.
- TEK is holistic. All elements of matter are viewed as interconnected. Western science is reductionist in which data are deliberately broken down into smaller elements.
- TEK is intuitive in its mode of thinking; Western science is analytical.
- TEK is mainly qualitative; Western science is mainly quantitative.
- TEK is rooted in social context that sees the world in terms of social and spiritual relations between all life forms. Western science is hierarchically organized and vertically compartmentalized.

There is much skepticism regarding TEK among Western scientists (Johnson, 1992). Part of this skepticism is rooted in the belief that the assimilation of native culture into Western culture has eroded native institutions and has impeded the ability of Elders to pass on traditional knowledge to younger generations. For example, Elders of the

LRRC indicated that their attempts to transfer knowledge to young people fell on deaf ears.

The elders often spoke of the young people as different people because they had not been taught in the same manner as the elders were. They stated that the young people were preoccupied with distractions such as television, video games and partying and did not know how to be respectful toward the old people as they had been taught (CIRC, 1996, p.111).

But TEK is evolving (Osherenko, 1988) just as Western science has during the 20th century (Johnson, 1992). Although positivism has dominated much of Western science resulting in objective, often ethnocentric research (Johnson, 1992; Peshkin, 1993), more recently there has been a growing realization among many academics of the interconnectedness of social, political, biological and environmental phenomena. This trend is consistent with the emergence of a qualitative research outlook in general. Thus, TEK and Western science are evolving together and increasingly researchers are attempting to integrate and balance the two perspectives.

Part of that balance requires selecting an appropriate methodology with which to approach the research; one that is consistent with the concept of TEK and cultural understandings. As van Manen (1990, p. 27) observes:

methodology refers to the philosophic framework, the fundamental assumptions and characteristics of a particular perspective, and includes the general orientation to life, the view of knowledge, and the sense of what it means to be human which is associated with or implied by a

certain method.

Guba (1981) asserts that methodological assumptions serve as the basic belief system and guide the researcher by reflecting a particular world view. Working from within an interpretive perspective, researchers attempt to discover meaning in other peoples' lives. In this process, the best attempt is made to shape the world both as we see it and as the subject may view it. In this relationship, the respondent becomes more than a subject, the respondent becomes a co-researcher.

There are several assumptions which underlie the interpretive paradigm (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). First, that reality is not only complex, but also constructed. For example, my interpretations of reality are subjective because they are based not only on my values but my life experience as well. Since a large part of my life experience has involved wilderness guiding and the development of wilderness tourism products, I was aware that these experiences would affect how I interpret the phenomena of tourism development in the Caribou Mountains. For example, as I was flying into the Caribou Mountains for the first time, I recall thinking to myself that because of the numerous burns and the seismic cut lines on the landscape, it was doubtful that this scarred environment would support the development of ecotourism. This assumption was based on my experience as a wilderness guide in protected areas in Alaska, the Yukon Territory and northern British Columbia. By keeping a personal journal I was able to "bracket" my professional and academic knowledge of tourism as a well as my personal values by reflecting on the nature of my observations and notes taken during and after informal interviews.

The second assumption views research as an interactive process, where the inquirer and the co-researcher are inseparable. While issues may arise that challenge the second tenet, such as personal conflict and the concept of separate world views, effective communication, mutual respect and trust are research principles that can address these challenges. It is important that the principles of respect and trust are just not assumed but built slowly over a period of interaction with co-researchers. The third assumption maintains that research should be conducted in the subject's natural environment. I was able, in the course of this study, to conduct most of my research in the physical and cultural context of the LRRC First Nation.

Qualitative research has often been criticized for its lack of rigour and unreliable research outcomes (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). To address this criticism in terms of reliability, qualitative researchers will often use more than one method of data collection, a process known as triangulation. They will also conduct member checks and submit to peer debriefing (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Denzin, 1994). Member checks are a means by which the researcher checks his/her interpretations and observations with participants in the study. This can occur either formally or informally and should be conducted on a regular basis. Peer debriefing exposes the researcher to a disinterested peer who plays the “devil’s advocate” in order to “keep the researcher honest.” During these briefing sessions, all areas are open to questioning by the peer and allow the researcher to clear “the mind of emotions and feelings that may be clouding good judgement or preventing emergence of sensible next steps” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 308).

As my research progressed, I conducted member checks with my co-researchers

as themes developed in my research. In addition, on several occasions I found it useful to consult peers in order to discuss my experiences in the Caribou Mountains. These sessions often uncovered my own biases relating to the research and its development. Realizing the importance of reliability, I used several methods to gather data inclusive of interviewing, observation and document research.

B. Community-based Research

My research was community-based. This approach involves a process of "systematic inquiry aimed at generating information or understanding which contributes to community development. The research process may be used to validate or extend traditional knowledge; it can also be designed to generate new insights that lead to solutions to existing problems" (SSHRC, 1983, p. 2).

Community-based research implies participation in the process of discovery and understanding for both the researcher and people in the community. Participatory Action Research (PAR), the predominate form of community-based research has been utilized in regions of northern Canada (e.g., Johnson, 1992; Ryan & Robinson, 1992, 1990) and has found favor among First Nation communities (Masazumi & Quirk, 1993) as the tenets of PAR embrace traditional and cultural practices such as learning-by-doing, and consensus building. While PAR has been used as a methodology to advocate change for socio-political and economically marginalized groups throughout the world (Fals Borda & Rahman, 1991), its use in this study influenced data collection methods rather than advocacy.

While I was genuinely committed to the people of the LRRC First Nation as Fals Borda and Rahman (1991) indicate a participant of PAR should be, I also recognized my own limitations and hesitancy in becoming involved politically. Instead, I adopted the philosophy of PAR which assumes that the method of inquiry should be consistent with the cultural traditions of the people involved (Fals Borda & Rahman, 1991), and be done in a ‘relaxed’ (Chambers, 1992) manner. In this way, I was able to avoid several traps that participatory researchers sometimes fall into such as the tendency to impose stereotypes and dominant viewpoints, and the urge to rush in and “help” without fully understanding the social and political processes within the community (Reason, 1994; Chambers, 1991).

C. Methods

The primary research methods employed in this study were participant observation and interviewing. I kept a field journal to record my observations and also made notes in my personal journal. In addition, I reviewed secondary literature such as feasibility studies, historical literature and government documents to add insight and provide context to the research. Participant observation and informal interviews, however, form the bulk of my data collection and were recorded in field notebooks. The specific methods of the research are elaborated upon below.

a) Participant Observation

Interpretive social research is an ongoing process. In its course, there is no attempt to confirm or deny pre-existing theories or hypotheses. Rather, the focus is on description

which emerges from analysis and interpretation of the collected data (Henderson, 1991).

Field research relies largely on participant observation, which as Burgess (1987, p. 1) observes, "involves observing and analysing real-life situations, of studying actions and activities as they occur. The field researcher....relies upon learning firsthand about people, and a culture." Participant observation is considered the technique of choice "when behaviour can be observed firsthand or when people cannot or will not discuss the research topic" (Merriam, 1988, p. 86).

Researchers using the participant observation method can assume several types of roles when using this research method (Spradley, 1980; Merriam, 1988). These are:

- *Complete participant*: Identity of the researcher is unknown to group being studied. Researchers in this role must be cognizant of the ethical dilemmas in assuming this stance.
- *Participant as observer*: Primary role of the researcher is as participant rather than researcher. Issues of concern in this position are confidentiality and the depth of information revealed.
- *Observer as participant*: Researcher acts as participant but primary role is data gatherer. Observed group is aware of and supports researchers's role as primary data gatherer.
- *Complete observer*: Observer is hidden and/or unknown to the group being observed.

My field research consisted mainly of participant observation where I assumed the role of *observer as participant*. This position allowed me greater access to the LRRC community and its members as it was necessary to build trust among my co-researchers

by involving myself in the day-to-day activities at Margaret Lake Lodge in the Caribou Mountains. *Observer as participant* allowed me to interact with members of the LRRC First Nation casually and in doing so, I found I was accepted by LRRC individuals more readily. For example, in the summer of 1997 I helped build a bridge to a small island adjacent to the Margaret Lake Lodge. During the three days it took to build this bridge, I took the opportunity to strike up conversations with those I worked with about the tourism project. As these LRRC people were aware of my study, my queries came as no surprise. In these informal interviews many insights were gained.

b) Formal Interviewing

Formal interviews, if done well, can provide deep and meaningful data that can reveal an individual's perspective. They enable a researcher to gain a better understanding of how others (co-researchers) view the world (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Patton, 1987). I was able to conduct several interviews that were taped and later transcribed. These interviews provided clarification and insight allowing me to focus more specifically on emerging issues in the research.

As I spent a significant amount of time with Andrew, a local Cree trapper, I was able to develop the necessary rapport to then ask for a more formal interview which was conducted in the Caribou Mountains and later in Edmonton. Other individuals that were interviewed included the members of the LRRC First Nation employed at Margaret Lake Lodge, two advisors to the LRRC First Nation one Elder, and one member of the local forest industry.

Although I had intended to conduct additional in-depth audio-taped interviews, this did not occur as it was noted by one advisor, that the LRRC people had been “interviewed to death.” Thus, while I did complete several in-depth tape-recorded interviews, the bulk of my data came from participant observation and related methods.

c) Informal Interviewing

Informal interviews form a large component of participant observation (Spradley, 1980). "Informal interviewing occurs whenever you ask someone a question during the course of participant observation" (Spradley, 1980, p. 123). The insights generated from this research are due, in part, to informal interviews that I conducted as the opportunity arose. After talking with people, I would usually excuse myself and find a place to record my observations of the conversation in my journal. Oftentimes, I was unable to write in my journals until the evening. As I was not allowed to conduct formal interviews that were tape-recorded, I took every opportunity to chat informally with a broad range of people. The insights I obtained are therefore, developed from a wide range of casual, yet often directed, conversations with members of the LRRC First Nation.

My informal interview notes were kept in a field journal which consisted of several spiral bound notebooks. In my entries, I focussed on three areas; the setting, the substance of what was said quoting if possible, and my own comments which were often either initial insights or new questions to be raised. As the study progressed, my journal entries became more detailed as I realized two things: 1) qualitative research methods require attention to detail, and 2) as I was unable to conduct the formal taped interviews

as I had anticipated, my notes from the informal interviews would form the bulk of my data. Fortunately, I was in the position to talk with many people from the LRRC First Nation such as members of council, the Chief, Elders, members of the communities, and advisors to the LRRC First Nation.

d) Personal Journal

I kept a personal journal over the duration of the research. This personal journal which predated the study, allowed me to reflect on aspects of the research as it progressed. Through reflection I was able to “bracket” my other experiences with tourism both academically and professionally from the incidents and insights I encountered conducting tourism development research in the Caribou Mountains. For example, I soon realized that both my academic and wilderness guiding backgrounds predisposed me to certain views regarding the nature of tourism development. My first summer in the Caribou Mountains I recorded the following comment in my personal journal which illustrates how I negotiated my past and present experiences:

Having arrived in the Caribou Mountains today, I was amazed at the amount of burns and cut lines that scar the land... I'm up here to explore among other things, this places potential for ecotourism but that sort of development is unlikely given the scarred landscape. To be honest, after seeing this place, I would be reluctant to travel here as a “tourist”...

(Personal Journal, June, 1996)

This type of reactionary comment reveals my initial observations of the Caribou

Mountains which were obviously not value-free and based largely on what I deemed appropriate conditions for nature-based tourism development. My personal journal contained many reactionary comments of observations and experiences I encountered during my research. However, it also helped me to explore my interactions with places and people and reach new understandings. After spending several days in the Caribou Mountains, notes in my personal journal took on a different tone. Denise, a young woman from the LRRC, and I had travelled by boat across Margaret Lake to explore a smaller lake noted earlier on a topographical map. After our short hike, we realized that we would be unable to return to the lodge by boat as the wind became stronger and the waves were too large for our small boat. Rather than wait for the wind to die down, we walked around Margaret Lake back to the lodge which took approximately four hours. My entry in my personal journal reflects my thoughts of this walk.

From the air this land seems inhospitable as it appears charred and sectioned by the many cut lines. But from the ground you discover things not visible from a plane such as the re-establishment of plant communities... the purple scorpion weed and of course the fireweed. Together, these plants form almost a "purple haze"...could this place appeal to tourists?... could this living and working environment as opposed to only those pristine-spectacular Banff like environments-appeal to people?

(Personal Journal, June, 1996)

The personal journal also allowed me to become aware of the decisions I made regarding the direction of inquiry. This aspect was important, as it was necessary to adjust means of data gathering on several occasions.

D. Analysis

Analysis was ongoing and inductive. Data consisted of field notes made during participant observation, transcripts and notes from formal and informal interviews, reflective thoughts from my personal journal, and secondary sources such as government literature. As my analysis progressed, I consulted with my co-researchers, to verify the accuracy of my interpretations of their perspectives. My personal journal assisted in allowing me to understand how my biases may have affected the outcomes of my analysis as well. This was particularly important as I came to realize my own ethnocentric perspectives and how they affected my perceptions of experiences and conversations in the Caribou Mountains. The data analysis occurred in several phases.

Phase One This phase occurred from the start of the research to the end of data collection in May 1998. During my first field season I would read and re-read the entries in my journal and the transcripts of my initial interviews in order to help focus my observations. From this process, several initial categories emerged.

Phase Two Once data collection was complete, I spent a significant amount of time with the text of my field journals, personal journals and transcribed interviews. Using this process, initial themes were developed that best illustrated the data collected. Themes were identified by key words and phrases occurring and reoccurring in the texts. A folder was developed for each theme that contained portions of text illustrating the theme. In this process, the aim was to saturate the categories (Glaser & Strauss, 1968) or themes until no new phenomena occurred. In this study, saturation was not reached as the study prematurely ended.

Phase Three The identified themes were compared with all themes and grouped into larger categories which were titled. Once these categories were identified, they were compared to each other and refined.

Phase Four This phase consisted of a period of reflection concerning the research, the collected data and its transmission into themes and the initial write-up of the dissertation. This process was vital as it allowed me to advance my understanding of the themes and their interconnectedness.

During the initial stages of data analysis I was able to consult with my co-researchers in order to verify the themes emerging from the data. These checks occurred in the field and over the telephone once I returned to Edmonton. Since May, 1998, I have not conducted member-checks. At the completion of the dissertation, I will attempt to

present my findings to the LRRC First Nation.

E. Ethical Considerations

Guidelines established by the General Faculties Council of the University of Alberta were adhered to throughout the research project. As required, an application for ethical approval was submitted and approved by the Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation ethics review committee. In addition, I informed my co-researchers through an informed consent letter (Appendix A) that explained that their participation was voluntary and they were free to withdraw from the study at any time.

Notwithstanding my adherence to the ethics of research, I also knew that the LRRC individuals I worked with were payed by the LRRC First Nation to work with the university researchers involved in the Caribou Mountains Research Partnership. In fact, even though Andrew was working his trap-line, I later learned that he was payed to accompany me on his trap-line. Knowing this, I have sometimes questioned the motivations behind individuals from the LRRC community to get involved in this research and I have wondered about the research implications of this relationship based on an economic exchange. I also realized that paying individuals in the LRRC community accomplished two things: 1) it validated the value of their knowledge and experience; and 2) it served as a method of distributing resources to individuals in the three LRRC communities. While I have protected the identity of individuals within the thesis by using pseudonyms, anonymity was not guaranteed given the nature of the research, the way it was coordinated, and the size of the LRRC community.

An ethical dilemma I confronted while in the field, analysing my data, and in the writing process was the lack of “native voice.” Although I had intended to represent the LRRC’s story through their own words, the data and analysis that follow are based primarily on my own field notes and written remarks made in my personal journal. Thus, even though I would have still interpreted their “voices” with audio-taped interviews, at least these insights would be based on references to transcribed texts of actual conversations. Instead, my interpretations are based on conversations that I recorded later in my field and personal journals.

That I was unable to conduct many audio-taped interviews was more a reflection of the political process than my inability to develop relationships with band members willing to participate in audio-taped interviews. In fact, it was a non-native advisor to the LRRC that told me that I was not allowed to audio-tape interviews in the Caribou Mountains. When I asked permission during my second summer field season to conduct interviews in the LRRC communities, it was indicated that my research was relevant to the Caribou Mountains and not the LRRC communities off the plateau. Despite the lack of “native voice” in this dissertation, the comments recorded in my field and personal journals in addition to other LRRC documents have yielded significant insight into the initial stages of sustainable tourism development in the Caribou Mountains.

F. Fieldwork

As Wolcott (1995, p. 63) observes, “fieldwork includes everything one does from outset to completion of a field-based study.” Researchers working in the field need to

know when to be methodical. More importantly, researchers conducting field-based studies must realize the difference of conducting field research, or just being in the field. The following discussion outlines my fieldwork in the Caribou Mountains and indicates how I moved from “just being in the field”, to conducting fieldwork.

a) First Summer Field Season

In the initial stages of the research, I was certainly just in the field, as it was important for me to first understand who I was working with and within what context. Although I first made contact with members of the LRRC First Nation in March 1996 at the Edmonton Sportsmen Show, I did not actually travel to the Caribou Mountains until the summer of 1996. During this initial field season, I became acquainted with the Caribou Mountains and the desire by the LRRC First Nation to develop more tourism opportunities in their region that were nature-based. Through discussion with several key advisors to the LRRC First Nation, mutually acceptable research objectives were developed.

During this field season I wrote extensive notes in my field journal as well as my personal journal. However, it took time and a great deal of thought to begin sorting these observations into reoccurring themes. As the summer progressed it was evident that beneath the stated LRRC motivations for tourism development, lay other factors. It was at this time that I first became aware that the LRRC were developing tourism for other than economic reasons. Near the close of the summer, I had a chance to verify these perceptions with several individuals of the LRRC community as well as its advisors.

While much of my time was spent at Margaret Lake Lodge in the Caribou Mountains, I travelled extensively by float plane throughout the region assisting with several other studies sponsored by the Caribou Mountains Research Partnership (CMRP). Doing this provided me with greater access to the Caribou Mountains as well as the chance to work closely with several LRRC members such as Andrew, who invited me to accompany him on his trap-line the following winter.

b) Winter Field Season

By the end of the first field season, Andrew and I had become close friends. After telling me about his trapping cabin and his life on the trap-line, he invited me to accompany him on a trapping trip the following winter. I was told by other members of the LRRC community that it was a great honour to be invited to accompany Andrew on his trap-line and indeed, I felt honoured. Preceding our trip together, I flew from Edmonton to High Level where I was invited to address the Chief and Council of the LRRC and discuss my findings from the previous summer and also discuss my research plans for the following summer. During this meeting an Elder stood and addressed me personally in Cree. Andrew translated his remarks noting that the Elder had warned me to watch for thin ice on the river and lakes and to proceed with caution. I thanked the Elder for his remarks and said that I would always let Andrew go first, a comment that brought laughter from the council and the Elders.

At the close of the meeting, Andrew and one advisor noted that the council and Elders both trusted and respected me as I had been honest and straightforward. In

addition, it was emphasized that it was an honour to have an Elder warn me of the dangers and wish me luck on my winter trapping trip with Andrew. The Elder's words, were said to convey his approval of my work and intentions.

The trapping trip lasted 10 days and occurred in February 1997. It was an opportunity to encounter the Caribou Mountains during the winter season as my previous experience had been only in the summer months. More importantly, this visit allowed me to interact with Andrew within a context defined by his lifestyle. At appropriate moments during the trip, I would ask Andrew direct questions related to the study objectives. For example, the previous summer I had drawn several conclusions regarding the LRRC's motivations for tourism development. While Andrew was not a council member, he nevertheless commanded respect in the community and knew the politics of his people. He was able to verify and help me adjust several of these conclusions as well as provide insight into other dimensions that had emerged from my earlier observations and informal interviews. Oftentimes during this trip I was too exhausted to write in the evenings. Instead, I recorded my observations on tape and transcribed them when I returned to Edmonton.

c) Second Summer Field Season

I made two, three-week visits during this field season (June and August 1997) to focus explicitly on issues that had been noted the previous summer and winter. It was my intention to be more direct in my questions as I had begun to develop broad themes related to the data I had collected thus far but which I believed deserved to be explored in

greater depth. Also, as I had spent most of my time in the wilderness portions of the Caribou Mountains, I planned on visiting the communities of the LRRC in order to gain a broader range of perspectives.

After my arrival in the Caribou Mountains I was told that I would not be allowed to conduct taped interviews nor was I to visit the other communities as my work was in the Caribou Mountains. In this dissertation it is difficult to convey how this transpired or the attempts to negotiate this as it presents an ethical dilemma in so small a community. Although I did not conduct the type of interviews I desired nor met the number of individuals I wished, I continued to direct my informal conversations with LRRC individuals and council members who travelled to the Caribou Mountains toward issues related to tourism and the specific themes emerging from the study. From these encounters and my day-to-day involvement in the Caribou Mountains, themes that emerged the previous summer and winter were now becoming clarified and refined.

d) Additional Data Collection

Data collection continued throughout 1998 with several interviews in Edmonton with Andrew and one Elder related specifically to trapping. I also had the opportunity to meet with several advisors to the LRRC people and ask specific questions related to the development of key themes emerging from the research. During this time it was apparent that my research objectives no longer satisfied several individuals in the larger LRRC community as there had been no product (e.g., business plan) developed as an outcome of my research. Although there were several people in the LRRC community including key

advisors who believed in the research and felt it provided insight that would allow them to make more informed decisions regarding tourism development. However, as the research was controlled by other people in the LRRC community, support was withdrawn as the desired outcomes had not been forthcoming. Furthermore, frustration was expressed with the study objectives even though they had been developed collaboratively during the first summer field season.

The narration of my fieldwork and examples of my experiences partly illustrate how I negotiated this research process and where and when I conducted the research. There were times when I was just in the field, in particular the first summer. However, as I both became more fully aware of the issues related to the research and the nature of conducting qualitative research in the field, my data collection became more focussed and systematic. I consistently tried to ensure that it remained culturally appropriate. Issues surrounding the process of this research will be revisited in the final chapter.

G. Conclusion

My research is community-based and it is framed within an interpretive paradigm. Concepts which inform my research are Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) and Participatory Action Research (PAR). TEK implies an interconnectedness and presupposes a qualitative approach. Also, the gathering of TEK is based on the fundamental principles of: respect, reciprocity and empowerment. PAR, a research method widely used in native communities (Johnson, 1992), focuses on the development of knowledge that can change the social, political and economic structure of oppressed

and marginalized peoples. The data collection methods that I chose for this research and the philosophy with which I approached this study reflected the principles of TEK and PAR.

CHAPTER FIVE

MOTIVATIONS FOR TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN THE CARIBOU MOUNTAINS

The economic benefits associated with tourism appear to be the major catalyst for the desire to pursue this type of development. Tourism development diversifies local economies, creates employment opportunities, and promotes income generation. As a result, many communities, especially those in rural settings, seek the advantages of tourism development. While tourism development can certainly promote economic benefits, it also has its costs in the environmental, social and cultural dimensions.

As Hinch (1995, p. 122) aptly puts in considering aboriginal tourism development in the Northwest Territory, “the anticipated economic benefits of tourism may be the driving force for the increasing involvement of aboriginal people in the tourism industry [but] the argument that tourism may actually strengthen traditional cultures is also very important.” Elias (1995, p. viii) echoes this sentiment by indicating that “simultaneous progress towards political, cultural, and economic goals” has been an approach adopted by aboriginal people since the 1960's. Tourism development and the associated economic impacts, if strategized and managed appropriately, can support positive, social, cultural, and political change in aboriginal communities.

The motivations behind the desire to develop tourism by the LRRC people are embedded in their need to improve their poor economic conditions which have resulted because of their marginalized status as a people in Canada. However, there is a belief that

this development should not come at the expense of their traditional and contemporary culture (LRRC, 1988). Rather, tourism development and the economic changes, it is hoped, will support changes in other dimensions. This chapter describes the motivations which underlie the LRRC's decisions to develop tourism on their traditional lands in the Caribou Mountains. Themes which have emerged from the research include those related to: economic, socio-cultural, and political/environmental motivations. Within each of these themes, sub-themes have emerged which provide insight into the growing desire by the LRRC First Nation to develop tourism opportunities on their traditional lands.

A. Economic Motivations

Tourism development in the Caribou Mountains is primarily economically motivated. There is the belief that economic development will lead to other positive changes in the social and cultural fabric of the LRRC society. To better understand the nature of their desire to pursue tourism development as an economic activity, it is essential to appreciate the context under which this desire occurs.

As noted previously, the LRRC First Nation share characteristics common with many other First Nation communities in Canada. Because of their marginalized status in Canada, these nations have been unable to obtain economic freedom which has contributed to a number of social issues such as drug and alcohol abuse, family violence and a feeling of apathy among many younger adults (Frideres, 1988).

a) Diversification of Economic Base

Traditionally, the LRRC were trappers, hunters and gatherers, moving in small bands centred around the Little Red River from which their name is derived. After signing Treaty 8 in 1899, the LRRC together with other Treaty 8 First Nations, were encouraged to develop agricultural practices. In fact, under the Treaty agreement, Indians were given seeds and tools to begin this new type of domestic production. However, many indigenous people were unable to make the transition from trapping and hunting to farming (Smith, 1981; Ward, 1995).

In conducting this research, I spent a considerable amount of time with Andrew, a Cree trapper who exemplified the important role that trapping plays in the LRRC community. While on his trap-line I noted in my journal:

The trap-line we were traveling on had been in Andrew's uncle's hands for over 50 years. Before that, the trap-line belonged to his father who had received it from his father. Andrew was born on his father's trap-line. Even though he left to attend a residential school, he never lost his connection with the bush, returning to trapping as soon as he could. It seems that trapping is much more than just a way to earn money because it doesn't seem like Andrew earns very much. More importantly, it seems to define Andrew and also his role in the community.

(Field Journal, February, 1997)

Given the significance of trapping to Andrew's identity, it was interesting to find in a government supported evaluation of the resources of the LRRC First Nation (Price &

Associates, 1968, p. 12), that trapping and other subsistence activities were ignored. In a report written in the late 1960s, government consultants indicate:

the principle elements of opportunity for members of the Little Red River Band are agricultural development of the John D'or Prairie Reserve and the Fox Lake Reserve and off-Reserve employment...Should agricultural resources of the area be developed, the economic pattern of the area will be altered to such an extent that employment opportunities of Indian people will be greatly enhanced...

That was recorded in 1968. It was also noted that the Band was affected by a high rate of unemployment which was reflective of their overall lack of marketable skills since many members of the LRRC have “spent most of their lives in isolation..hunting and trapping...The type of work that many of the men have been doing has been such that they have not been forced to learn new skills (e.g., fire fighting and seismic line cutting)” (Price & Associates, 1968, p. 11).

In recent times, the LRRC have developed economic opportunities for themselves. Little Red Air is a small charter plane service owned and operated by the LRRC First Nation. This charter company flies throughout the region and services many of the remote communities in northern Alberta including those of the LRRC such as Fox Lake and Garden River. Other job opportunities include on-reserve employment in band administration and utility services that the Band provides to the residents of the Reserves. In addition, the LRRC First Nation indicate in community profiles (LRRC, n.d.) that logging, trapping and hunting serve as the major economic base. But, as one LRRC

advisor points out, "there continues to be 95% unemployment and 75 % welfare in the LRRC communities" (Personal Journal, May, 1996) While tourism development may not in itself make major inroads into the high rates of unemployment and welfare dependence in the communities of the LRRC First Nation, it may provide significant economic benefits for some individuals and provide small scale economic diversification within the LRRC First Nation.

In discussing the benefits of tourism development with advisors to the LRRC, I noted:

Several of the advisors have high hopes for tourism development here in the Caribou Mountains and for the communities of the LRRC. They've been told they have the opportunity to develop a world class ecotourism destination with a boreal/sub-arctic focus. Yet, while this may be true, I also see that these men have already realized some of the limitations to tourism development within the Nation such as training skills, and just pure organization.

(Field Journal, June, 1996)

Because of the perceived limitations related to tourism development, I was asked by advisors of the LRRC to explore many tourism development options.

Bill suggested I explore what individuals can do as well as the Nation. For example, he indicated that many people still spend time out in the bush either hunting, trapping, or both. Andrew for example, had just built a trapping cabin not too far from Margaret Lake. Bill wondered what the

possibilities of tourism centred around trapping would be. I indicated that I would explore this issue with Andrew later in the Summer.

(Field Journal, June, 1996)

This opportunity arrived in August 1996 as Andrew arrived at Margaret Lake and I accompanied him on several brief excursions to smaller lakes in the Caribou Mountains such as Wentzel Lake and the Fleming Lakes. During our travels we discussed the possibility of trap-line tourism and the small scale economic and social benefits that might accrue from this type of development. For example, Andrew had indicated that trapping was often not economically feasible as the costs outweighed the benefits. Andrew noted that he had to purchase fuel, food and maintain his skidoos and cabins even though there were times when he was not successful trapping. As one advisor had indicated the possibility of trap-line tourism development, a trip was arranged with Andrew during the following winter to explore this experience for its tourism potential.

Andrew believed that trap-line tourism would allow those involved an opportunity to offset the costs associated with trapping, especially during those seasons when fur bearing animals were scarce. “Andrew said that last season he only trapped 16 marten and did not cover his costs... It appears that although trapping is important from a cultural perspective, it is becoming increasingly expensive” (Field Journal, August, 1996).

Tourism development focused on experiencing the cultural practice of trapping could bring economic benefits to individuals who participate in this cultural practice. More importantly, Andrew indicated that trapping could provide opportunities for younger Cree children to become involved in a business that teaches cultural activities.

But the possibility of trap-line tourism was discussed among several advisors and LRRC people sparingly and although I had traveled on Andrew's trap-line and articulated its possibilities for development as a tourism experience, there appeared to be greater emphasis placed on the concept of ecotourism.

Several years earlier, researchers from the University of Alberta had traveled to the Caribou Mountains in order to conduct bird surveys. One individual in this group (Miller, 1995) approached the LRRC and indicated that strong possibilities existed for ecotourism development. He went so far as to draft a proposal to study the possibilities of ecotourism development in the Caribou Mountains although it was not acted upon by the LRRC at the time. When I became involved in this study, it appeared that the concept of ecotourism and its development potential in the Caribou Mountains had gained momentum. One advisor noted that "ecotourism activities could provide economic opportunities for a wide array of people, not just those showing the people around" as ecotourists were demanding and required a higher degree of service. "Ecotourists also had money to spend" as Bill observed and this money could be spread among the number of services developed by the LRRC such as their air charter business, their two sport-fishing lodges and those people in the community who make cultural arts and crafts sold at the sport-fishing lodges.

Trap-line tourism and/or ecotourism could provide economic benefits to the LRRC community if developed appropriately and marketed effectively. These types of development could also play an important role in diversifying the LRRC economy and spreading these benefits to a wider range of community members. The realization of such

potential, of course, would depend upon a carefully managed development plan that examines both the economic benefits and costs associated with tourism development.

b) Diversification of Sport Fishing Lodges

Currently, the LRRC own two sport-fishing lodges: Margaret Lake Lodge and Pitchimi Lake Lodge (see Figure 1). Margaret Lake Lodge is situated on the north side of Margaret Lake and can be serviced by a fixed-wheel aircraft and by float planes. I first went to Margaret Lake Lodge in June and then in August, 1996. I recorded my initial impressions of the lodge and its setting in my journal during my first evening at Margaret Lake Lodge.

Stiff breeze blowing in from the lake, a welcome change from the hot humid day in Fort Vermillion. Located on the north/east shore of Margaret Lake, the lodge looks upon a broad expanse of water, choppy today. The color of the water is dark amber, warm to the touch. The lodge itself consists of a main house where the lounge, dining room, and showers can be found. There are octagonal huts as well as trailers (which I am housed in and smells of diesel). The lodge and its setting presents a relaxed atmosphere.

(Field Journal, June, 1996)

During my visits to the lodge, I became acquainted with staff members who also shared their impressions of the lodge and its effect on them. One elderly woman from the LRRC First Nation that worked at the lodge from time to time during the summer had

this to say about the lodge:

Well, its so isolated and you come here in a plane and you land here and you don't know what your expecting when you get off the plane. But after you come in and you see this living room, dining area, kitchen and you think...wow and it makes you feel comfortable and the lake is just right there. And you get up early in the morning, and if the sun is shining and you look across the lake and its so beautiful. Like you feel calm, you don't even think twice about your worries back home, you know, that's how it is for me.

(Interview, August, 1997)

In the LRRC feasibility study of Margaret Lake Lodge and Pitchimi Lake Lodge it was indicated that, "Margaret Lake Lodge has a collection of buildings from mobile trailers to log cabins to a very well developed 40' by 70' two story modern building. The Lodge is very well developed and has the potential, with some modification to the plumbing and layout, to be one of the nicest facilities in western Canada" (Pannel Kerr Forster, 1992, p. 3).

Pitchimi Lake Lodge is smaller by comparison, and can only be accessed by float plane during the summer season. I stayed at Pitchimi Lake Lodge briefly while traveling in February 1997 with Andrew. I recorded my impressions of the lodge after arriving that first evening.

Arrived at Pitchimi Lake cold and tired after traveling Andrew's trap-line for most the day. It's much smaller than Margaret Lake Lodge, but cozier.

I'm in a large cabin with one bedroom (Andrew's room for tonight); the main room has a kitchen, wood stove, a table with benches, and a couch with a hide-a-bed (my bed) in the corner. There is no indoor plumbing, and our first job was to clear a path to the biffy once we arrived at the cabin. Next to the cabin is an Atco trailer with bunks inside. I'm under the impression that in the summer, the caretakers sleep in the cabin, and the guests sleep in the bunkhouse. The lake itself is actually further away from the cabin than I thought which is unfortunate. Andrew was telling me that the Forest Service told them to move it to higher ground because of some regulations regarding sewage, or something to that effect. The lodge is located in a bay, and when I face the water, I can look out across the bay and see the peninsula on the other side. Andrew said that lodge used to be on the peninsula before it was moved.

(Field Journal, February, 1997)

Both lodges were purchased by the LRRC in 1992 for \$330,000 after four years of negotiation. This purchase was viewed as a “strategic investment by the Little Red River Cree Nation in long-term, sustainable economic development” (Pannel Kerr Forster, 1992, p. 2). It was noted that “the membership of the Little Red River Cree Nation [faced] chronic unemployment, and the Nation [was] committed philosophically to economic development projects that provide employment for Band members and [were] compatible with traditional values concerning respect for the environment” (Pannel Kerr Forster, 1992, p. 1) The philosophy behind the purchase of the lodges reflects their

tourism policy articulated in the Community Tourism Action Plan the LRRC submitted to the provincial government. In their policy statement, the LRRC indicated a desire “to set aside the Caribou Mountains from its aboriginal pursuits in favour of a consumptive and non consumptive commercial renewable resource wilderness recreation operation” (LRRC, 1988, p. 4).

In their feasibility study the LRRC outlined the potential nature-tourism market for Margaret Lake Lodge. It was recommended by a consultancy group (Pannel Kerr Forster, 1992) that if a nature tourism product were to be developed to supplement the main activities of the lodge, certain guidelines should be followed such as:

- separate the fishing and nature tourism market entirely. Offer nature tourism during the low fishing season;
- develop interpretive trails in the area and study the ecology of the area;
- remove elements of the hunting and fishing experience from key areas of the lodge itself; and
- develop a cultural lifestyle product by showing native lifestyle of the Little Red River Cree Nation if this is thought to be appropriate.

Ecotourism has become a buzzword among many of the LRRC leadership and their advisors regarding tourism development in the Caribou Mountains. This new type of tourism is seen as an alternative to the current market now serviced by Margaret Lake Lodge which is primarily sport fishers. Despite earlier recommendations by a consulting service (Pannel Kerr Forster, 1992) to avoid pursuing ecotourism markets because of the other competitive markets in the Arctic and the lack of a significant natural attraction, the

LRRC continue to be interested in pursuing the ecotourism potential of the Caribou Mountains. After staying several days at Margaret Lake Lodge during which time I toured the Caribous in the company of Andrew and Gerald, I reflected in my journal on the conflicting messages that I had been receiving.

I feel that I am already being pulled in several different directions. Bill [LRRC advisor] seems intent on me looking at the area in terms of a market perspective. Basically what it comes down to is this. The lodge is empty and losing money. I've been told by the lodge manager that the lodge is in the hole a quarter of a million dollars. So, does the band want ecotourism because it reflects a type of tourism more consistent with how they view their relationship with the land, or does ecotourism offer another option for successfully managing the lodge?

Field Journal, August, 1996)

Ecotourism development, it would seem, has been viewed by several members of the LRRC First Nation including some of its advisors as a panacea for the lodge at Margaret Lake.

It appears that the LRRC have high expectations for ecotourism development and that the Caribou Mountains and the lodge at Margaret Lake would be the focus of this attraction. Bill indicated that Margaret Lake Lodge was financially unstable, and that further tourism development was needed to either complement the activities already in

place there, such as fishing, or to replace them altogether.

(Field Journal, August, 1996)

There is no doubt that the LRRC First Nation are motivated economically to develop tourism. This was expressed generally by advisors to the LRRC as well as other members of the LRRC community who believed that tourism could alleviate economic conditions in the LRRC communities by bringing greater economic diversity to the local region. In addition, tourism development could replace or complement the experiences offered by the lodges in the Caribou Mountains. The ability of tourism to address economic issues will depend largely on how the LRRC First Nation proceed with this development option.

B. Socio-Cultural Motivations

This section explores the socio-cultural dimension of the LRRC's motivations for tourism development. Linking these two dimensions was necessary as it quickly became apparent that both the social and cultural context of the study and its findings were intricately connected. These issues had a direct connection with the marginalised status of the LRRC people.

The LRRC First Nation history of contact with the early traders and later the government of Canada has been difficult to describe. While it was not necessarily violent, it was not quite benign. The policies of assimilation and acculturation encouraged by the Hudson Bay Company, missionaries and later the Canadian government, while a kind of gentler oppression, were oppressive all the same and have resulted in similar pathologies

found in those peoples who had their traditions and culture more forcibly altered.

Before travelling to the Caribou Mountains, I met Bill, the LRRC Environment Advisor. The purpose of this visit was to familiarise myself with the LRRC and to understand the protocol of conducting research in their communities. In my first meeting with Bill, I recorded these notes in my Personal Journal:

I met several days ago with Bill who is the land-use advisor for the LRRC.

We met at High Level Diner and while over breakfast, I was introduced to the world of the LRRC First Nation. It's obvious that Bill is committed to his work and the people he represents. His passion for the LRRC people could not be hidden by his gruffness and raw edge which at times was unsettling.

I didn't ask too many questions. I just listened. I became aware that the LRRC suffer from high unemployment, welfare, and a lack of direction and focus in their youth. That their world views have been shaped by the process of assimilation and acculturation. Their young have been born and raised on the reserves, which Bill indicated were established sometime in the 1960's. The parents of these children were born in the bush, many on trap-lines. Their world view has been influenced by their experiences in the bush and on the reserve. But, more significantly, it appears that this generation also experienced residential schools. While I have heard stories of these schools, I have yet to fully understand the implications these schools and their policies may have had on young

native children. May be that will come. The older generation, were born and raised in the bush. Bill said that many of these people only speak Cree, with little English

(May, 1996)

I remember reflecting on this conversation with Bill for some time. I also realized that this was his interpretation and that at some point, I hoped to better understand these issues from members of the LRRC First Nation themselves. As my research progressed, I began to understand these issues from the perspectives of several of the LRRC members. While I have noted several such occasions in my field journal, one stands out as significant for me as I saw this exchange as a benchmark in my personal relationship with Andrew. Below, I describe a late night conversation with Andrew, the Cree trapper with whom I traveled. This excerpt was taken from my field journal.

Last night just as I was falling asleep, Andrew began to tell me more about his life. We were in his cabin sharing one long wooden platform against the back wall. Piled high with foam, we slept with our heads at opposite ends and our feet just touching. I was tired, very tired, yet, I also knew that what Andrew was saying was important. I told him what Bill had said about the three generations and how each generation, based on their very different experiences, might have different outlooks on the world. He agreed with Bill's assessment and said that his life had been very different from his parents who had lived and travelled on a trap-line, and also very different from his own kids. In the residential schools he was not allowed

to speak his own language. Andrew said that they tried to make him a white man. If you made a mistake, such as speaking Cree, you would be punished. While Andrew did not go into details, Andrew said a lot of the children were abused, including himself. I asked him how his experiences affected his relationship with his children. He said he was a good father (which I clearly had seen), but in his younger days he was a roughneck, always drinking and raising hell. His children were all good children...

(Field Journal, February, 1997)

That was one of the few times that Andrew spoke candidly about his past. I have always hoped that I did not insult him by falling asleep when he was telling me important aspects of his life. During that evening I remember having an intense feeling of shame for what had been done to his people by white Canadians. I also lamented on the repercussions these events had on other peoples' lives in the LRRC community. Was it possible to heal after such emotional, mental and physical hardship? Understanding tourism's ability to address social and cultural issues meant trying to comprehend the history and experience of the people I was working with. My conversations with Bill and later with Andrew increased this awareness.

a) Reconnection of Young People with Elders

When I began my research, it was indicated by several people in the LRRC community that tourism could promote opportunities other than just economic. While they were not always explicit in terms of these *other* opportunities, I recognized that

tourism could offer a means for re-connecting youth with Elders in the LRRC community given conversations and experiences with members of the LRRC.

At the outset of my trapping trip, I was picked up in High Level by a friend of Andrew's. He was a young man, my age, who had a very difficult life. I later audio-taped my observations of this meeting and transcribed them in Edmonton at the completion of my trip. This observation reflects the socio-cultural difficulties confronting Ben, and perhaps others of his generation.

Ben is a young man, about 33 years old, he lives in John D'Or, he has a wife and two children and is currently on social assistance. In High Level we had lunch together and had an hour and a half drive back to John D'Or. It was a really interesting drive because I had the chance to get to know Ben because I was a bit hesitant that I would be met by someone that would be difficult to talk to, but to my surprise Ben opened up quite a bit. He's had lots of troubles. His parents were both alcoholics, he was an alcoholic and had gotten himself into a lot of trouble. He's been dry for about two years. Apparently his wife helped him out quite a bit during this-enabled him to start life new, but he's got some dreams and I hope he can make them true. We talked quite a bit about young people of his generation-how there is a gap in traditional knowledge between himself and others in his age group and older people. He really looked up to Andrew-Andrew was I guess a mentor, an Elder to him and he wants to

spend some time in the bush, to become acquainted with it, but he hasn't had the opportunity.

(February, 1997)

I continued my notes of this meeting in my Personal Journal. "He [Ben] feels disconnected to the bush and feels that he has lost his way. Ben considers Andrew his closest friend and feels that Andrew has already led him part way back to who he is suppose to be; a Cree Indian" (February, 1997). These comments reflect the difficulties that many LRRC individuals experience in their lives. In the *Northern River Basin Study Traditional Knowledge Component* (Crozier Information Resources Consulting Ltd. [CIRC], 1996, p. 111), Elders that were interviewed in the study expressed great concern that their knowledge was not being transmitted to the young people before they died.

The Elders often mentioned that children and parents did not speak to each other and that they were further hampered because the children do not speak Cree, which prevents them as Elders from communicating with their grandchildren. The Elders indicated that traditional skills are almost all gone, such as snowshoe making, hide tanning, hunting skills, and the ability to read the water and the land. The young people do not seek advice or consultation with the Elders on matters pertaining to lifestyle and traditional practice. It used to be important to know who was related to whom in the Elders' youth, and this is virtually non-existent for the youth today.

It is difficult to gauge the effect tourism development would have on the nature of the relationship between Elders and young people. Most likely it would depend on the scale and nature of tourism development, and also the willingness of individuals to allow themselves the experience of learning from an Elder. When I asked one Elder what he would like to see offered as tourism opportunities “he said that rather than bringing outsiders here (Caribou Mountains) to learn about their culture and traditions, he would rather see their young people come up and learn traditional activities from people like himself and others. Our children, the Elder said, would be the tourists” (Field Journal, August, 1997).

Critical proponents of tourism have argued that development of tourism can adversely effect the social and cultural fabric of communities (e.g., Mathieson & Wall, 1982; de Burlo, 1996). On the other hand, these same people have argued that tourism can promote cross-cultural exchange. As one Elder in the LRRC community indicated, this exchange was needed from within their own community as well.

The extent to which tourism could close the gaps between Elders, LRRC youth and non-native tourists would depend largely on the willingness of Elders to participate in tourism development. Generally, it was the Elders and other older members of the LRRC First Nation who expressed concern related to social and cultural issues. If this concern could be translated into meaningful participation by Elders and others band members in the development of tourism who wish to encourage greater cultural understanding among their own people then it may be possible for tourism to positively address these social and cultural issues.

b) Reconnection of Youths with Tradition and Culture

Young people in the LRRC communities are caught in a contradictory world. A world in which they are simultaneously pulled toward and pushed from their culture. Pressure is placed upon them to conform to the dominant society, but there is also pressure for them to recapture their traditional roots. Gerald, a LRRC individual in his early twenties, remarked to me on one of our several trips to small lakes in the Caribou Mountains that “he didn’t know if he was coming or going. One minute he’s expected to be an Indian, the next he’s suppose to act like a white man” (Field Journal, August, 1996). While we were traveling, Gerald carried a book of teachings by Alberta Native Elders. He also carried a small satchel tied around his neck containing sacred items. When asked about the book and satchel, he indicated that he believed these items kept him grounded in who he really was.

Many young people in the LRRC communities are disconnected from their traditions and culture. For those who are connected or have the opportunity to experience traditional aspects of their culture, it is largely the result of proactive parents or other relatives who have kept them grounded in who they are as a people. Also, community programs in the LRRC First Nation offer opportunities to experience cultural traditions. I noted earlier in this chapter of meeting a young man named Ben who expressed a desire to learn more of his heritage and to experience more traditional activities. Ben had been an alcoholic as had his parents. In my field journal, I recorded these comments in the winter of 1997.

Ben said that there was a gap in traditional and cultural knowledge

between the younger generation and the older generation. I asked him if it had anything to do with alcohol and drug abuse in the communities of the LRRC. While he wasn't so sure, he indicated that many people, like him, who had lost their way, had in fact been raised by parents who had drinking problems. I believe that is why Ben admires men like Andrew so much.

(Field Journal, February, 1997)

Elders believe that children and young adults would benefit most from tourism development as they would play a critical role in its future. However, in conversations with several young members of the LRRC, the majority indicated an unwillingness to participate in tourism if other jobs were available in fire fighting, logging, or hauling. Yet, one individual remarked that if he had the opportunity to work in tourism and learn and share aspects of his culture with others, than he would be more than willing to work with tourists. That these differences exist among young people in the LRRC communities demonstrates the diversity among people within the same peer groups.

One concept that was never fully developed during the research was the establishment of a cultural camp modelled loosely on the Rediscovery (Henley, 1989) program. The Rediscovery program was developed in the Queen Charlotte Islands for local Haida youth and depended on the participation of local Elders. The goal of the Rediscovery program is to promote cultural self-identity through participation in traditional and cultural practices. What makes this program so successful is the high level of community support. Unfortunately, in this study I was unable to determine the level of

community support for this type of tourism development.

The ability for tourism to connect youth with Elders and with their Cree culture was noted mainly by Elders and others who had experienced the social and cultural changes in their community as the LRRC moved from subsistence living to a lifestyle largely dependent on government transfer payments. The potential benefits of tourism were raised by Elders themselves who thought more of the social and cultural impacts of tourism and thought less of the economic impacts of tourism.

C. Political/Environmental Motivations

In combining the concepts of politics and the environment, I have recognized that for the LRRC the two are interconnected and that in order to affect control over environmental issues such as access to and control over traditional lands, political negotiation is required. While I was unable to gain insight into the intimate workings of their political processes, considerable insight was gained as to how tourism might influence changes in the political and environmental dimensions.

Native societies throughout the world have generally lost access to traditional lands (Elias, 1995) and with this loss, the spiritual connections between the land and the people have begun to erode as well. Feit (1989, p. 72) writes:

Looking from a perspective of several decades, indigenous populations around the circumpolar world have found themselves increasingly encapsulated in nation states. That is, from being wholly autonomous societies in essentially complete control of their own daily lives, and in

effective control of the land and resources which they utilized, they have become societies enmeshed in complex relationships to the wider world, and in particular to the national states and to international economies.

This point was echoed by an advisor to the LRRC who indicated that the LRRC were a “nation within a nation, but a nation with few if any resources” (Personal Journal, May, 1995).

The LRRC First Nation has existed in the boreal forest as a people for thousands of years and have maintained a spiritual balance between themselves and all other things within the forest (Sewepagaham, 1998). Rather than viewing themselves as being outside the landscape and its master, the LRRC see themselves as part of the landscape. During my travels in the Caribou Mountains with Andrew, I began to appreciate the essence of their relationship with the land. The land, Andrew explained one evening:

brought spiritual renewal to his people. When you disturb the land, you disturb the people. Andrew explained that rather than just being a place to hunt and trap, the land became a place to learn the values associated with traditional activities like sharing, respect and cooperation. But also, it was a place for spiritual growth since traditionally young males would go on vision quests in the bush seeking spiritual guidance. But while the bush is not used as it once was in a traditional sense, especially with all the changes when people moved onto reserves, the relationship is the same.

(Field Journal, August, 1997)

Chief Johnsen Sewepagaham (1998, p. 325) observes that Euro-Canadians have a

“radically different perspective.”

They see themselves as standing outside of the landscape, and its master; they divide the landscape into distinct portions which separate use from protection, and within which, the notion of balance is lost.

This Euro-Canadian relationship is based on dominance and control of nature. This reflects how natural areas have come to be managed and has also served as the premise for the relationship between the government of Canada and indigenous people in Canada. Under this framework, the LRRC were displaced onto three separate reserves and their traditional land segmented into Crown Provincial Forests, protected areas such as Wood Buffalo National Park and other land-use designations outside the control of the LRRC. However, the LRRC are attempting to take back control of their traditional land. As Chief Sewepagaham (1998, p. 1) noted “Our Nation asserts ownership of a traditional territory which includes about fifty-thousand square kilometres of forest land within the lower Peace River watershed.” The Caribou Mountains are an integral component of this claim. This statement reflects the late 1980s decision by the Tribal Council and Elders “To regain control within our traditional territory by any means available” (Sewepagaham, 1998, p. 3). Tourism development, in addition to other strategies, appears to have been treated as one such alternative to gaining greater control of their traditional territory.

a) Accessibility to Traditional Lands

The Caribou Mountains have been used traditionally by the LRRC for hunting and trapping. More recently, they have become a destination for sport-fishers who stay at

Margaret Lake Lodge, owned and operated by the LRRC First Nation. While the Caribou Mountains are used for both traditional and commercial purposes such as the sport-fishing lodges, the cultural significance of this territory has remained the same. A LRRC woman visiting the Caribou Mountains with her daughter stated:

The Caribou Mountains are special to me and my people. The water is part of me....even the burnt trees and their carbon. They're a part of me. I bring my daughter up here so she can learn this. This is what I tell her.

(Interview, August 1997)

Despite this attachment to place that is embedded in the LRRC culture, their claim on the Caribou Mountains is tenuous in that it is based on traditional proprietorship which does not give them legal title to the land under the Treaty 8 negotiations. In fact, "Treaty No. 8, in its written form, is held by the Crown-In-Right-of-Canada to have been a Land Surrender Agreement" (Sewepagaham, 1998, p. 1). The LRRC First Nation, however, refute this interpretation and have begun to re-assert their rights for self-determination on their own lands.

Choosing to forgo litigation and confrontation in efforts to gain access to the Caribou Mountains, the LRRC have, instead, adopted strategies that would give them greater economic control of the Caribou Mountains. Purchasing Margaret and Pitchimi Lake lodges was a strategic investment for the LRRC. Even though the lodges were and continue to be financially unviable, there are other long term benefits. For example, by acquiring both lodges, the LRRC First Nation have become the sole tourism operator in the Caribou Mountains. As sole tourism operator in the Caribou Mountains, other

services owned and operated by the LRRC such as Little Red Air can be utilized to a greater extent. However, a benefit of even more importance was highlighted by one of the advisors to the LRRC First Nation. "By controlling commercial activities on the Caribou Plateau, the LRRC are in a better position to gain even greater control of their land, especially if at some point they make the decision to make a land claim" (Field Journal, August, 1997).

This being the case, the LRRC are keen to point out that many people still use the Caribou Mountains for subsistence activities such as trapping and hunting. These culturally significant activities are important reminders that, as a people, the LRRC are still dependent on this plateau. But, the LRRC need to reinforce their traditional ties to the Caribou Mountains especially since trapping and hunting among the LRRC are beginning to decline.

After speaking with several advisors to the LRRC and members of the Nation, it has become evident that ecotourism has become viewed as an opportunity to connect people to the land and to strengthen the LRRC's claim of ownership to the land. While the concept of ecotourism is not understood in its academic sense, there is the belief that ecotourism based on traditional activities would provide the argument that the nation not only has commercial tourism businesses operating on the plateau, but that many of these activities are culturally significant. This would seem to strengthen their claim that the Caribous are theirs to control and manage.

(Field Journal, August, 1997)

Ecotourism, based on traditional activities such as bird-watching and wild-life viewing has emerged more recently as an attractive alternative for development in the Caribou Mountains. For example, trap-line tourism has been suggested as one such alternative as well as wilderness camps in which Elders and youths from the LRRC community can combine traditional activities and the more contemporary concepts of ecotourism. However, the scarcity of large mammals, and low overall bird species diversity make this type of tourism development tenuous, especially if visitor expectations are to see an abundance of wildlife. That is why it is important to determine just how traditional aspects of the LRRC will become part of the tourism experience since that may prove to be a more important part of the overall attraction than specific types of flora and fauna.

Ecotourism development based around traditional activities emerged early in my research. As noted in my journal, I became aware that some individuals viewed ecotourism as an opportunity to not only diversify the current tourism ventures on the Caribou plateau, but also as a future strategy for greater control of the Caribou Mountains. However, it is apparent that despite the LRRC desire for ecotourism type development in the Caribou Mountains, there are significant hurdles that must be overcome. Even though the goal may be greater access to traditional lands that a combination of ecotourism and cultural activities may provide, the communication and organization issues with the LRRC will make this a difficult process. As one senior advisor to the LRRC remarked, “collectively, we don’t really know what we want to do with tourism in the Caribou Mountains, but we do know that tourism will offer us more

opportunities for sustainable use of the Caribou plateau" (Field Journal, August, 1996). In considering the concept of sustainability, the issue of control needs to be addressed as well since a lack of control of resources or of the decision-making process will diminish the success of sustainable development.

b) Control over Traditional Lands

It is becoming clear that the LRRC are determined to gain access and greater control of the Caribou Mountains. What remains less certain is how the LRRC will undertake this process. As noted previously, the LRRC have, under Treaty 8, surrendered title to what they consider their traditional lands which consists of approximately fifty thousand square kilometres. However, the LRRC refute this interpretation and have instead, asserted their rights over the land in question. Rather than resorting to litigation and confrontation, the LRRC have adopted alternative strategies in which to gain gradual control of their traditional land. These strategies have developed as the LRRC have experienced exclusion from the decision-making processes as they relate to their traditional lands. For example, with the creation of Wood Buffalo National Park in which the LRRC community of Garden River is located, subsistence activities such as hunting and trapping have been jeopardized.

Outside the park, the LRRC have entered into cooperative management agreements with the government of Alberta and resource-based industries in the area. Cooperative-management has been viewed as one strategy in which to reassert decision-making powers over traditional lands and resources. Cooperative-management is defined

by the LRRC as “an interim measure which leaves the larger Treaty/Constitutional issues undisturbed, and concentrates on use of existing consultation, planning and resource-tenure processes to implement pragmatic initiatives for self-reliance and self-determination” (Sewepagaham, 1998, p. 4). The LRRC have developed agreements with both the Alberta government and Daishowa-Marubeni International (DMI) which provide the LRRC First Nation with timber rights to roughly 20,000 square kilometres of provincial forests. As the LRRC and DMI jointly manage portions of the forest, advisors to the LRRC have considered the possibility of establishing tours for Japanese people to witness how this joint management occurs in addition to experiencing other natural attractions in the Caribou Mountains. This option has never been seriously pursued. However, the LRRC consider these partnerships crucial to their cultural survival in that they have the ability to affect economic development that is consistent with their relationship to the land. As one advisor to the LRRC noted, “without these partnerships, the LRRC would lack the control within the decision-making circles of industry and government” (Field Journal, August, 1997).

The LRRC have also entered into a research partnership with the Sustainable Forest Management-Networks Centres of Excellence (SFM-NCE) based at the University of Alberta. Within this research partnership, both social science inclusive of this research project and biological science studies are being conducted in the Caribou Mountains and the lower Peace River plateau. The primary goal of this partnership is to integrate scientific knowledge with traditional ecological knowledge. By doing so, and understanding how to access and to manipulate the data, the LRRC will ultimately

control a data base from which to inform their decisions regarding land-use on their traditional lands.

It is acknowledged that tourism development would benefit from the insight provided by the many studies that have been conducted in the Caribou Mountains.

When I spoke with Bill, he indicated that there would be no tourism development in the Caribou Mountains unless they were well aware of the impacts tourism would bring. As an example, he mentioned that the muskeg environment, which characterizes the Caribou Mountains, was an extremely sensitive environment to have people trampling through. My research, Bill indicated, and that of others were all collaboratively designed to provide the LRRC with greater autonomy in decision-making. The key to this, Bill informed me, was information and the ability to use it well.

(Field Journal, August, 1996)

Echoing this point, Andrew stressed the desire of the Chief and council to make informed decisions regarding development in the Caribou Mountains. Andrew said: We've got lots of opportunities for development, like oilfields and forests that could provide jobs for our people and maybe tourism too. But the Chief and council have to take all that scientific data, the information, before people muck around.... so nothing major could go wrong with the environment.

(Interview, October, 1997)

Notwithstanding the economic benefits that partnerships with government and industry may provide to the LRRC people, they are based primarily on consumptive use of the Caribou Mountains and to a certain degree, dependency. First, even though the LRRC have practised consumptive use of the Caribou Mountains, their use has been guided by a stewardship philosophy that is mutually interdependent. While forestry development may provide jobs, it does not reflect the type of relationship that the LRRC support. Rather, it is based on economic necessity. Second, the LRRC have entered into these partnerships because it offered them a position at the decision-making table of which they would not have been able to otherwise participate. Realizing this, it becomes important then to understand just how tourism would provide greater control of their land.

Tourism development, as one advisor indicated, would offset consumptive use of the Caribou Mountains and lower plateau. It could eventually replace or at least reduce the LRRC's dependence on resource development such as forestry and oil and gas exploration. This sentiment reflects the LRRC's earlier decisions regarding tourism development in their Community Tourism Action Plan. More recently, however, one advisor noted:

We want to refocus non-Indian use to non-consumptive uses. Tourism development such as ecotourism would allow us to offset these non-sustainable uses of the Caribous. By replacing these activities such as forestry and oil and gas exploration with sustainable activities and ones

which are culturally relevant, we can control and strengthen our claim to our traditional land.

(Field Journal, August, 1997)

D. Discussion

The LRRC's motivations for tourism development have been considered under three broad themes: economic, socio-culture, and political/environmental. Within these dominant themes, sub-themes emerged that help to explain the underlying motivations for tourism development in the Caribou Mountains. Do these themes represent the views of the LRRC First Nation as a whole? Not necessarily. What is represented are the viewpoints of those individuals I had contact with, along with my own observations and experiences. It should, however, be noted that most individuals I had contact with had significant roles in the decision-making process for the LRRC.

While these themes illuminate the motivations underlying the tourism development process the LRRC have engaged in, they also open doors for further discovery. Economic incentives are a strong motivator for tourism development. This is true for many people and communities around the world, as well as the LRRC. For example, tourism development in Pond Inlet, located in northern Baffin Island, and the greater Northwest Territory has been adopted as an economic strategy to alleviate high rates of unemployment caused by the abundance of young people entering the labor market as well as the boom and bust cycle of resource extraction industries (Hinch, 1993; Grekin, 1994). Australian Aboriginals have embraced tourism development as an

opportunity to address economic and political issues (Altman, 1989) as have Native Americans in the Southwestern United States (White, 1993). However, the story behind these economic motivations differ from place to place.

I have observed during my research that the LRRC desire to improve their economic condition through tourism development. Tourism would expand their economic base. While it would not replace the activities of trapping, hunting and logging, it would at least, offer an alternative type of employment for some individuals and in a broader sense, diversify the economy on the reserve.

More immediately, ecotourism development would offer an alternative to the current sport-fishing operations of both Margaret and Pitchimi Lake Lodges. It is viewed as a possible quick fix for the lodges' large debt. Ecotourism development, it was believed, might provide an opportunity to revitalize these resources.

In retrospect, this need to develop a quick economic fix by focusing on the popular concept of ecotourism without fully appreciating its implications for development, puzzled me the most, and also put me in direct conflict with several advisors to the LRRC. There was the perceived need to develop an ecotourism product and marketing plan without first having a vision. I believed that a vision of where one wanted to go and where one wanted to be was an important part of a development plan. I saw my role as a researcher to discover information useful in the development of that vision in contrast to many LRRC who saw me as an "expert" who should be providing the answers. As a result, I found myself in the unfortunate position of continually negotiating my role as a researcher interested in deeper and broader issues related to the

development process versus the role of a consultant with the ability to offer a quick solution.

Upon reflection, I realize that the LRRC's economic motivations are very pragmatic in that they relate to issues which need addressing in the short term such as high levels of unemployment and welfare, minimal local employment opportunities, and the economic status of the two lodges. Of those people concerned about the economic issues, the LRRC advisors, lodge employees, and council members were the most vocal. This was due, in part, to their awareness of the overall economic status of the LRRC First Nation as well as their direct involvement with the lodges. People who appeared more connected to the land expressed concerns related to the socio-cultural motivations. These people consisted of Elders and other individuals such as Andrew, who continued to hunt and trap in the bush.

The LRRC First Nation are not the only indigenous group in Canada who view tourism as more than an economic opportunity. In northern Ontario, the Webequie First Nation have developed tourism opportunities that combine traditional and contemporary aspects of their culture (Suganaques, 1996). Goals that they have established for their tourism development reflect the need to provide both economic and social benefits to the community. Tourism experiences have been developed by the Webequie First Nation that serve both the youth of their community through their direct involvement as well as the tourists.

It is recognized that native people across Canada, particularly youths, are in danger of losing their connection to their culture. Living on the land has traditionally

provided this connection as it was in this environment that the Elders and others taught the young the principles of life. But this relationship between the LRRC and their land has eroded. Like the Webequie in northern Ontario, the LRRC hope tourism will allow them the opportunity to address these socio-cultural issues.

Tourism can certainly produce economic benefits, but its ability to alleviate socio-cultural problems is debatable and will depend on how the development process is managed. If managed poorly, there is doubt that socio-cultural benefits will be forthcoming. Elders in the LRRC community were quick to indicate how tourism development could offer opportunities to involve young members of the community. Tourism was seen as an avenue to reconnect people with the land and also to reconnect youth with Elders. But these benefits were rarely raised by advisors to the LRRC First Nation or by other decision-makers.

Instead, as my research progressed, I was continually asked to focus on business related issues rather than pursuing other socio-cultural issues in the development process such as, the level of community support, the willingness to share aspects of their culture, and the level and type of involvement from community members. I was only able to come to understand these issues tangentially to the main concern of determining what would work or would not work in the Caribou Mountains in terms of tourism as a form of economic development. Perhaps socio-cultural issues can be more readily addressed once broader and more strategic goals have been achieved.

The LRRC First Nation clearly have a vision to gain greater access and to ultimately control their traditional land. Combined with other strategies such as

partnerships with government, industry, and research institutions, tourism development provides an opportunity to move toward more autonomy. Using tourism to gain access and control was a strategy consciously employed by the Haida Gwaii of the Queen Charlotte Islands off the northwest coast of British Columbia (Guujaaw, 1996). By occupying their traditional lands and moving to replace forestry activities with tourism, the Haida Gwaii were able to achieve greater control over these areas. The key to their strategy was the development of the “Watchmen”, who were individuals placed at “Haida Heritage Sites” that collected fees from visitors, but who also acted as interpreters of their culture. These acts appeared to contribute to the designation of Gwaii Haanas National Park Preserve and Haida Heritage Site.

Of concern to native groups including the Haida Gwaii and the LRRC First Nation is the fact that in trying to gain access and control of their traditional lands, they may in fact begin to lose control through park designations. The LRRC have already experienced this reality in Garden River located in Wood Buffalo National Park where hunting and trapping have come under the scrutiny of federal officials as these activities contradict Parks Canada policy. There is the knowledge that “within protected areas, human use is often restricted, or prohibited in order to conserve wilderness values. This alienates users from the forests” (Sewepagaham, 1998, p. 325). Because of their fear of losing control through protected area designation, the LRRC have chosen to forge partnerships with institutions so that they may gain greater control of their traditional land rather than pursuing strategies that may lead to loss of control over some aspects of their culture.

It is clear that these co-management partnerships, especially those with industry and government are wearing thin.

- To date, industry and the Provincial Government are, at best, reluctant partners.
- To date, the federal Government refuses to engage and provide on-going support for the process.
- Five years into the process a number of [LRRC] people are asking..."Is this any better than confrontation or litigation - Are we getting anywhere" (Sewepagaham 1998, p. 6)?

And ultimately, the effectiveness of these partnerships will depend on how they were established and under whose framework they operate.

Overall, the LRRC's motivations for tourism development are both pragmatic and philosophical. Pragmatic in the sense that their desire for tourism development will address immediate practical needs. Philosophical in that their motivations for tourism development are linked to greater issues related to their historical relationship with the Dominion of Canada and how this relationship has been developed. It is well documented that native peoples across Canada, including the LRRC First Nation were subject to practices of forced assimilation and acculturation (Frideres, 1989). Through these practices, native societies lost control of their own lives. The LRRC First Nation, has therefore, begun to re-assert control through co-management partnerships with government and industry and through tourism. Thus, the element which binds the pragmatic with the philosophical is the desire for greater control.

With the understanding that the LRRC's motivations are linked by the underlying

issue of control, or lack thereof, it is also evident that they are pursuing tourism development options without a clear vision of what they want to attain. This is evidenced by the lack of communication between decision-makers in the LRRC community who advocate different types of tourism while continuing to fall back on the concept of ecotourism.

Earlier in my research, I approached Bill, a LRRC advisor and suggested that the LRRC might want to contact the Canadian National Aboriginal Tourism Association to obtain advice regarding tourism development. This proposal was dropped rather quickly as it became apparent that the LRRC would rather visit other tourism lodges in the north and see first-hand how they managed and marketed their tourism operations. As I was the “tourism expert”, it was my task to organize this one day fact-finding trip. The lodge manager from Margaret Lake Lodge, Andrew, and several council members responsible for economic development were to accompany me on this trip. That the LRRC were more interested in seeing how things worked in other places rather than reading recommendations from a national organization came as little surprise as I gradually realized two things: the LRRC were tired of national organizations and their promises; and from a cultural perceptive, it was more common to learn from a demonstration rather than a lecture or report.

On the day of our trip, I realized that Andrew and I were the only ones on the airport tarmac as the others canceled at the last minute to attend to other pressing business. It was frustrating for me, as the goal of this trip was ultimately to expose decision-makers responsible for management of the lodge and for economic development

to other northern lodges that were thought to be well established and efficiently managed.

Nevertheless, Andrew and I were encouraged to go despite my concerns.

Ultimately, this conflict was representative of two approaches to the issue of tourism development in the Caribou Mountains that I continually attempted to bridge though not always successfully. While the members of the LRRC along with several of their advisors were interested in more immediate results of the research and focused my attention to practical issues which I did try to address, I was also intent on uncovering issues that lay deeper and were not as readily observable such as their motivations for tourism development. For example, when I asked a direct question regarding their motivations, I often received a straightforward reply such as this is what the Chief wants. It was only after spending considerable time in the Caribou Mountains, attending meetings, speaking with members of the LRRC and their advisors, that I was able to understand their motivations more fully.

E. Conclusion

This chapter has highlighted three broad motivations that have emerged from the study; *economic, socio-cultural and political/environmental*. Essentially the insights gained about the LRRC's motivations for tourism development are that:

- Motivations for tourism development differ between individuals;
- Motivations are reflective of basic community needs;
- Motivations for tourism are not directed by a clear vision; and
- Motivations are linked by the element of control.

While it is obvious that motivations will differ between people, these differences appear to reflect the extent to which people are connected to the decision-making circles within the LRRC. Advisors to the LRRC are clearly motivated by the issues related to control of resources and economic development while Elders appear to be motivated more immediately by socio-cultural issues. That there is no clear vision is not surprising since at this point, the LRRC appear to be exploring their options. Realizing that their motivations are inherently linked to the issue of control raises the question of whether or not the LRRC can pursue sustainable tourism development on their traditional land even if they are in a position of control.

CHAPTER SIX

THE CARIBOU MOUNTAINS: ISSUES AND CHALLENGES OF TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

While the LRRC have made no decisions regarding the type of tourism they wish to develop, or more fundamentally, if they will continue to develop tourism opportunities at all, the obstacles they will encounter if they do decide in favour of development will be similar to those faced by other destination communities. However, in addition to the typical development challenges faced by most communities pursuing tourism, the LRRC will undoubtably encounter issues which are culturally based. The purpose of this chapter is to explore key issues and challenges related to the development of trap-line tourism based on my experience of having accompanied a trapper on his trap-line. While this discussion centers on the context of trap-line tourism, the issues addressed are relevant to most types of culturally based tourism development that might be initiated by the LRRC on their traditional land.

A. TALES FROM THE TRAP-LINE

In the winter of 1997 I traveled with Andrew on his trap-line. The purpose of my visit was to explore the feasibility of developing trap-line tours as potential options for tourism development, an idea that had surfaced in the summer of 1996 in discussion with Andrew and advisors to the LRRC First Nation. From this experience, three issues emerged which I explore below. They concern cultural commodification, the potential

conflict between ecotourism and indigenous tourism and the nature of host and guest relationships.

a) Cultural Commodification

The most important role that trap-lines appear to play in the culture of the LRRC is the link that they provide between the people and the land. Andrew described the significance of trapping and life on the land indicating that the principles of cooperation, respect, helping, and appreciation are taught through the traditional activities of trapping, hunting, and food gathering. Andrew appreciated the role that traditional activities like trapping played in developing young Cree children.

...while in residential school, Andrew travelled on his parent's trap-line during his short breaks. It's on his parent's trap-line that Andrew believes he was educated... He [has]-as Andrew calls [it]-a *bush education*. This *bush education*, based on traditional Cree values, was taught through the practice of trapping and hunting.

(Field Journal, February, 1997)

These lessons were seen as being particularly important in the LRRC communities given that young native people were felt to be losing their cultural roots. Young people seem to be in danger of not only losing the physical skills necessary to perform activities like trapping but even more significantly, of losing the values that underlie these activities (CIRC, 1996). As one Elder from the LRRC community indicated, "There has to be a way for young people to learn for themselves. The young

people don't know which way to go, white or native. They are caught in the middle" (CIRC, 1996).

Angie, a young LRRC women who worked at Margaret Lake Lodge in the Caribou Mountains indicated that trapping was a cultural practice that was slowly disappearing because the skills associated with trapping were not being transmitted. When asked how she felt about trapping, Angie remarked that:

Trapping is a way of life for my grandfather. He doesn't make money at it anymore but he still does it because it's in his blood. It's who he is... My ten year old goes with him on his trap-line even though he's missing school. Teachers don't mind because it's a cultural thing.

(Interview, August, 1997)

Angie believed that her son learned more about life and the principles which underlie their culture by spending time with his great-grandfather on the trap-line.

It was suggested that the involvement of the young people in tourism operations based on traditional activities such as trapping would anchor these people in their native culture. It would give them something to do, provide them with an income, and help connect them to the land. The economic benefits of this activity could be used to motivate young people to interact with Elders of the community in order to learn the skills necessary to pursue this form of tourism development. This interaction between generations and reconnecting with the land was seen as a major benefit of this type of tourism development.

Another potential benefit of trap-line tourism was seen as the opportunity for the

LRRC to share aspects of their traditional and contemporary culture with outsiders thereby fostering cross-cultural understanding. Despite this belief, some trappers raised the concern that the business of trapping for tourism could eventually diminish its cultural significance. They were afraid that if trapping became a way of entertaining paying visitors, the traditional values and significance of this activity might be lost even while the physical skills were maintained. This point was poignantly made by Andrew one evening at Margaret Lake Lodge:

Andrew believes that taking people out on his trap-line, providing they can take a harsh bush environment and are willing to respect *their* way of doing things would do no harm to the cultural significance of the practice of trapping—even if these people were paying guests. One Elder noted however, that he traps because it's his way of life. He never charges his family and friends for going on his trap-line. Why would he charge anyone else? The idea of strangers paying to come with him on his trap-line just didn't seem right.

(Field Journal, August, 1997)

There was also concern that the contemporary approach to trapping may not be marketable given contrasting expectations and practices. While there is general agreement that the expectations of tourists are to see and to experience 'authentic' native culture (Johnston, 1995), it has been pointed out that these expectations frequently involve dated or even false stereotypical images of native life (Berkhoffer, 1978). These potential misconceptions exist in the case of trap-line tourism as it is often romanticised in popular

literature. Rather than being dressed in furs, wearing moccasins and travelling by snowshoe or dog team around the trap-line, today's trappers are most likely to be dressed in a snowmobile suit, to wear insulated boots and to travel by snowmobile. This evolution of native culture was highlighted by one of the trappers who lamented on what he saw as an undesirable cultural change that has already occurred:

...most everybody has lost the knowledge of how to make moccasins and how to bead. Only those people beyond 50 have those skills and know how to do it.....they will soon be buying handicrafts from the white man instead of getting them from the Indian.

(Field Journal, February, 1997)

If trap-line tours were to be offered, the LRRC First Nation would have to make decisions in regards to the match between tourist expectations and current trap-line practices. Even in those instances where tourist expectations reflected authentic traditional practices, the LRRC would have to make difficult decisions about the balance of contemporary versus traditional cultural elements which they wish to offer. Such decisions reflect the challenge of controlling the commoditization process.

b) Ecotourism versus Indigenous Tourism

Prior to considering trap-line tourism as a potential form of development, the focus of the LRRC band centred on the fishing lodges but was eventually to extend to ecotourism activities such as bird watching and wild-life viewing. However, it appeared that members of the LRRC First Nation had never done any bird watching themselves in

a technical sense nor did they express any intrinsic interest in this activity. Their interest in bird life was more practical and tended to focus on birds as a food source and as an integral part of the land in which they lived.

In the summer of 1996 while touring the region with Gerald, one of the younger hunters, and exploring the potential of the Caribou Mountains as an ecotourism destination, the fundamental contradictions between the expectations of a typical ecotourist and the existing way of life of the LRRC became apparent. Typically, Gerald would leave camp in the evening to hunt birds, caribou or moose. One evening Gerald returned and indicated that he had just shot a caribou at the west end of the lake. The following excerpt from my field journal illustrates what may be a typical reaction of an ecotourist in response to this type of situation.

Last night Gerald shot a caribou. I was sitting in the cabin when I heard a boat returning to the camp. As usual, it was Gerald returning from hunting. I was used to hearing shots in the distance, but Gerald normally returned empty handed. When I went to the dock to greet him, Gerald was beaming...He said he shot a caribou at the west end of the lake and was going back to clean it as soon as he picked up some equipment. I don't understand why someone would kill a caribou. I've been trying to see them for three weeks and my first glimpse of a caribou will now be of a dead caribou! This is not the sort of thing that will work for tourism.

(Field Journal, August, 1996)

Upon reflection, I now understand that the content and tone of these comments

reflect my own ethnocentrism but they are also based on my experience as an ecotourism guide. While these views are not necessarily reflective of ecotourists in general, they do serve to highlight a potential conflict in values between hosts and guests.

Another issue that was raised on several occasions by the native trappers concerned anticipated pressure to modify the actual practice of trapping while tourists were present. Trappers indicated an unwillingness to change their ways for tourists who may not wish to see an unsanitised version of life and death on a trap-line. For example, they expressed a desire to continue trapping, even though there may be visitors present who feel uncomfortable with the actual death of an animal and the harvesting of its pelt. When Andrew was asked how he would explain his life to visitors on the trap-line, he made these remarks:

Well, I guess that actually trapping to us who are living in the bush is no different than home to us, it's my office, my workplace, my recreation, it means everything to me, eh? Like I do it for survival and every method I use to kill an animal is humane as possible so that they don't suffer. And for each animal that I kill, I give a tobacco offering for the life I was taking that the Creator give back whatever species I have taken. I don't over-trap, I don't kill off all the animals on my trap-line. It's enough that there are still animals around...The other thing too, that people concerned about other people taking life...This is a living earth, even the plants are living. Some people that eat vegetables are only vegetarians, but what about living vegetables that you eat. Because if they were dead vegetables

then they wouldn't dare, huh?

(Interview, October, 1997)

Even though I found it uncomfortable to be confronted by the harsh reality of death on the trap-line, travelling and living with a Cree trapper helped to clarify the cultural significance of this activity. While the individual experience of each visitor may vary substantially, given the typical profile of an ecotourist and my experience with ecotourism clients, considerable visitor discomfort with the harsh reality of life and death on a trap-line seems highly probable. On the other hand, given appropriate development and a marketing approach which informs potential guests of the realities of life on the trap-line, there is reason to believe that trap-line tourism could be successful and provide benefits to members of the LRRC First Nation community.

c) Host and Guest Relationships

Insight into the nature of the potential relationship between host and guests while on this type of tour package was gained by accompanying Andrew, a native Cree and active trapper, for a 10-day trip on his trap-line. In order to accompany Andrew, it was necessary to operate a snowmobile. Members of Andrew's household were amazed that I had not previously operated one of these machines. Rather than teaching the basics of snowmobile operation, Andrew left me to manage on my own. This worked well to a point, but there were frustrations to this culturally-based experiential approach to learning that included minor altercations between the snowmobile and a few small trees. Nevertheless, Andrew was impressed when I arrived at his trapping cabin close behind

him.

In addition to the contrast between this approach to learning and the more didactic approach that characterises most tourism operations, there were other significant differences in the relationship between host and guest. One of these involved cultural differences in communication as reflected in this field observation:

I am conditioned by my society to talk, even though there may be nothing of value to speak of. Andrew seldom talks unless it is related to an actual event of the day or some plans for the next day. I sometimes feel that he forces himself to talk when he would rather just sit and think, and contemplate....

(Field Journal, February, 1997)

These long silences eventually grew to be more comfortable as I began to appreciate the winter solitude that prevailed in this northern bush. In retrospect, this lack of animated discussion appeared to be the norm in the LRRC First Nation culture, especially in terms of those people actively involved in trapping. This reticence may also be due to the dynamics of the cross-cultural relationship between myself and the Cree trappers. The relative infrequency of conversation is likely to be uncomfortable for the visitors who arrived with the expectation that the trapper will entertain them with fireside stories and an on-going commentary of life on a trap-line.

The experiential approach to learning to operate a snowmobile was effective in that I did learn how to operate the machine. While I was not necessarily viewed as a tourist, but as a friend familiar with outdoor living, the experience certainly contrasts to

the typical tourism experience in which hosts cater to the immediate needs of the visitor. It also raises certain safety and liability concerns that may be viewed quite differently from each cultural perspective. The lack of conversation between guide and the guest is also atypical of non-indigenous tourism. The Cree trappers were initially reticent, rather oblique in their comments, and only sparingly shared information regarding their culture until a strong rapport had been nurtured. It was only after several months of regular contact that the trappers appeared to feel comfortable sharing stories of their life and culture. When asked if they would be willing to share these types of stories with tourists, the trappers indicated a willingness to do so providing they felt comfortable and trusted the visitors. Given the relatively short, albeit, intense duration of a trap-line tour, it is unlikely that this deeper sense of rapport would be achieved. If tourists are to have satisfying leisure experiences while on this type of tour, their expectations will have to reflect this reality.

B. Discussion and Conclusion

While trap-line tourism does offer some intriguing possibilities as a culturally focussed, community controlled tourist attraction for members of the LRRC First Nation, it also presents very significant challenges. Currently active trappers feel that such an initiative could play a positive role in revitalising native culture in their community as younger people respond to the economic opportunities that accompany the commodification of trap-lines as tourist attractions. There were, however, less definitive concerns expressed about unrealistic expectations of visitors and a possible subtle change

in the cultural meaning of trapping within the community. The consumptive nature of trapping also appears to be contradictory to the basic principles of ecotourism. Finally, it appears that native trappers have substantially different approaches to their role as guides and service providers than is typically the case in the tourism industry. To the extent that these differences are culturally based, trap-line tourism would have to be promoted very carefully to ensure that the visitors had realistic expectations before the trip.

If members of the LRRC are able to control the development of trap-line tourism or other types of tourism, negative impacts associated with this type of development may be mitigated. Furthermore, by having greater control of the development process, the opportunity for sustainable tourism is enhanced. In revisiting the definition of indigenous tourism, Hinch and Butler (1996) indicate that this type of tourism is characterized by indigenous control and/or having their culture serve as the primary attraction. As control is a key word in any discourse on development, tourism, it would appear, is no exception.

Depending on the degree of control native communities can determine the nature, the scale, and the speed of development (Hinch & Butler, 1986). In addition, native communities can control how their culture and its traditions are portrayed. Therefore, if aspects of a culture are commodified for tourism in a self controlled way, costs associated with this development may be marginal. As de Burlo (1996) noted with the Sa people of Vanuatu, South Pentecost, culture and traditions can form part of the tourism attraction without losing any significance if the community assumes greater control of host/guest interaction.

Trap-line tourism can provide social-cultural benefits indicated by the trappers

and Elders without losing its cultural significance if development is carefully controlled and managed by the LRRC. MacCannell (1976) articulates in his theory of tourism, that if “tourist spaces” are “staged” then the tourist gaze (Urry, 1990) is directed away from what may be perceived as intrusions into the local culture. Moreover, by recognizing the ability to shift this tourist “gaze,” communities such as those comprised by the LRRC can stand to benefit by focusing visitor attention on carefully constructed tourism experiences. Thus, a trap-line tourism experience can be developed that is removed from what the LRRC trappers and Elders view as an “authentic” trap-line where traditions that inform their culture are passed from one generation to the next.

Although the issue of commodification may be addressed by carefully controlling the development of the tourism experience, issues related to hospitality and service can be addressed in a similar manner. Through careful development that includes cross-cultural education and innovative marketing, native communities such as the LRRC can be proactive rather than reactive in the tourism exchange. A similar point is made by Pearce (1995) who suggests that both the host and the guest can become empowered by better understanding the cultural norms of each society. This type of information can also lead to an adjustment of expectations regarding hospitality issues. But this process of information exchange implies that the visitors as well as their hosts must work toward their respective tourism experiences. Pearce (1995) offers the analogy of a mountain climber or long-distance canoeist who prepares in advance of their journey. Tourists, through carefully planned marketing and pre-trip meetings could prepare for their journeys in a similar fashion. Thus, the LRRC First Nation, through carefully developed

cross-cultural education and marketing can influence how they and the tourism experience they provide, are perceived by the tourists.

Undoubtedly, the LRRC will encounter challenges associated with any type of tourism they choose to develop whether it is consumptive tourism such as trap-line tourism or a form of non-consumptive ecotourism such as bird-watching or wild-life viewing. Regardless of what type of tourism is developed, the challenges articulated in this chapter are not insurmountable. However, the key element in developing tourism and meeting the challenges of this form of development is the ability to control the process for their own benefit.

But how do the LRRC First Nation gain the control needed to not only address the challenges related to tourism development, but to affect sustainable development on their traditional land? As noted earlier, sustainable development may best be achieved through collaboration with other partners representing other economic sectors other than tourism. Several tourism scholars (Hunter, 1995; 1997; Butler, 1997; Milne, 1998) believe this is the *only* way sustainable tourism can be attained. If so, then one could assume that issues of control would be negotiated as one of the underlying tenets of sustainable development concerns the issue of community control (Mowforth & Munt, 1998). Perhaps the LRRC First Nation have already begun the steps necessary for gaining more control as they have developed a number of relationships with industry and government regarding land management issues in the Caribou Mountains. These issues will be explored in more depth in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 7

SEARCHING FOR SUSTAINABLE NATIVE TOURISM IN THE CARIBOU MOUNTAINS

The purpose of this chapter is to address the third research objective: to develop insight into the processes associated with the pursuit of sustainable native tourism development. To offer this insight, it is necessary to be cognizant of the LRRC First Nation's motivations for developing tourism and the specific challenges that may be encountered. However, understanding only the LRRC's motivations and challenges of tourism development are not enough, especially if the goal is to offer insight into *sustainable* tourism development. It is important to develop this insight more broadly by examining not only issues directly related to tourism but other land use issues in which the LRRC are involved. To facilitate this discussion, I will examine the theoretical context of the development approach the LRRC First Nation appear to be undertaking. This will allow a more comprehensive appreciation of their pursuit for sustainable tourism development in the Caribou Mountains.

A. A Contingency Perspective

The contingency perspective was alluded to earlier in this dissertation as a view that offered a new look at the role of development in First Nation communities. This fresh perspective, although cognizant of the earlier dependency and alterative development theories, recognizes the current First Nation approach to development that

stresses, among other things, collaboration between non-native partners, capacity building, and the recognition of the growing global economy. As Anderson (1995) observes, “First Nations acknowledge the necessity of participation in the global economy and are attempting to create a distinct mode of development that will permit them to do so” (p. 325). In a Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (DIAND) publication, the LRRC First Nation are highlighted as an aboriginal community that has developed a unique approach to economic development that reflects their “community traditions but also [integrates] with the market economy” (DIAND, p.59).

The contingency perspective was proposed by Anderson (1995) who drew on the roots of both the alternative and regulation theories. Alternative development approaches stress how development within the global economy “can be structured so that it satisfies the needs and objectives of the people of the region and not just the requirements of the regime of accumulation and interests of the managerial and corporate international bourgeoisies” (Anderson, 1995, p. 325). Wall (1997) noted that the alternative approach to development focused on basic community needs and incorporated the type of community-based tourism planning implied by Murphy (1985). Thus, rather than a *traditional* economic approach to development that has typified many tourism development projects, the alternative theory emphasizes a *human* approach to development. Regulation theory is premised on the successful participation in the economic system (Dicken, 1992) through a “highly localized” process which integrates cultures, values and local modes of production. Emphasis is placed upon the development of alliances and partnerships in order to affect development which reflects local

community needs. This perspective postulates that communities, regions and nations are all part of the global economic system (Anderson, 1995) and must therefore adjust to the system's form of accumulation.

The assumptions on which alternative theory and regulation theory are based, offer a contingent perspective which denotes the shift from dependency-based development to development which allows for re-assertion of local control. It is the strengths of each theoretical (alternative and regulation) perspective which Anderson (1995) draws upon in articulating the contingency perspective. The basic tenets of the contingency perspective stipulate that:

- Communities, regions and nations are all part of the global economy and must accommodate themselves to the dominant regime of accumulation.
- The nature of this accumulation with the global economy can reflect local, regional and/or national characteristics, needs and objectives.
- The potential exists for negotiation of mutually beneficial arrangements between the leaders of developing regions and those that control the global economy.
- An active civil sector capable of articulating the needs of their people and leadership capable of developing the strategies and negotiating the arrangements necessary to address those needs, is essential to the creation to the mode of development that will deliver benefits beyond the elites to the general population of a developing region (Anderson, 1995, p. 324).

Distinguishing the contingency perspective from the alternative and regulation theories are the last two points which stress the need for “mutually beneficial” arrangements

between different stakeholders and the need for leadership that can articulate community needs in order to make effective agreements with these stakeholders. “According to the contingency perspective, the emerging First Nations approach to economic development is well conceived and has the potential to succeed” (Anderson, 1995, p. 325). This prediction is based on patterns of economic development within 71 Saskatchewan First Nation communities studied by Anderson (1995).

Aboriginal communities, like the LRRC First Nation, are realizing the need to participate in the global economy and are developing unique strategies to do so. Key to the strategies being implemented by First Nation communities are associations with other First Nation and non-aboriginal governments, industries and institutions. Perhaps, the impetus for this shift in strategy for economic development came from the changing policies at the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (DIAND). Previously, DIAND had a high degree of control over First Nation development which was implemented through a highly formalized process with externally set rules and procedures. Now, operating under a new mandate (Gadacz, 1991), DIAND has placed the “responsibility for community economic development planning directly onto the shoulders of native communities” (p. 53). This rather abrupt shift in policy recognized that strategies for economic development were best conceived and developed at the grassroots level. Gadacz (1991) observes that this new focus was intended to “revitalize” the aboriginal community and provide an opportunity to strengthen economic, social and cultural dimensions of their way of life (Hanson, 1985).

What has not been addressed by Anderson (1995) in terms of the contingency

perspective are the underlying reasons why First Nation people's have adopted this approach to economic development. The contingency perspective implies a form of development based on community needs but situated within the larger global economy. This method of development is a better alternative to previous forms which stressed a dependent relationship. However, it appears that the contingency perspective also denotes a recognition by aboriginal communities that the only meaningful way to address their economic, social and cultural issues is to acknowledge their lack of control to act independently of the dominant economic system. Thus, the development of alliances enables First Nation communities to effectively function within the dominant economic systems.

The contingency perspective offers insight into the LRRC First Nation's approach to development for several reasons. First, the LRRC have reluctantly entered into alliances with industry and government as it became evident that in order to gain control over traditional resources, they had to have a role in the decision-making process. As Chief Sewepagaham (1998) of the LRRC noted, "our Council and elders made a very straight forward policy decision...to regain control within our traditional territory by any means available" (p. 3). Rather than resorting to litigation and outright confrontation, the LRRC have entered into partnerships and cooperative management agreements as an "interim" measure because of the unwillingness of both the provincial and federal governments to address aboriginal rights. Second, as the LRRC have acknowledged this approach to development, there is the realization that benefits can be derived from these alliances such as the ability to influence and in some cases control development on their

traditional land in a way that reflects both community needs and their cultural philosophy. Third, these alliances offer the LRRC an opportunity for education and training in a number of different economic sectors, but particularly forestry and land management. Finally, and probably the most significant, these partnerships and co-operative management agreements have enabled the LRRC to develop data gathering and analysis skills related to land use management (DIAND, 1997). These skills and the knowledge which can be generated from utilizing them within the Caribou Mountains offer the LRRC valuable insight into how their land should be managed.

It is important to understand how this development approach relates to the concept of sustainable tourism which the LRRC ultimately intend to implement. As numerous scholars of tourism have advocated (e.g., Hunter, 1995; 1997; Butler, 1997; Milne, 1998), tourism cannot be developed irrespective of other development strategies and economic sectors of a region. This is particularly true for the LRRC First Nation who are involved in several partnership agreements with sectors of the forestry industry. Also, in order to affect sustainable development of any kind, the local community needs the ability to exert control over the process (Mowforth & Munt, 1998). Zeppel (1998) echoes this sentiment by observing that for sustainable native tourism development to succeed, the aboriginal community must have control over the development process in order to integrate community needs into the development process. Partnerships, therefore, become an effective means for obtaining this control.

Given the approach to development that the contingency perspective postulates, it appears the LRRC First Nation development strategies do, indeed, reflect the tenets

outlined by Anderson's (1995) proposition. Thus, two assumptions are outlined below which are offered as guidance for the remainder of this chapter.

- That in order for the LRRC First Nation to develop sustainable tourism, it is necessary to take a broader approach to development that recognizes the importance of other economic sectors and their impacts on their traditional territory.
- Partnerships and cooperative management agreements have provided the LRRC First Nation with increased control and/or influence in land use decisions on their traditional land. These alliances are an interim measure employed by the LRRC to affect this control.

The contingency perspective offers a unique view of the LRRC First Nation's development approach. An understanding of how the LRRC may facilitate sustainable tourism development in the Caribou Mountains is offered by this perspective as well. The following discussion expands on these concepts by providing insight into the LRRC's various development strategies that in combination, may ultimately facilitate sustainable tourism development in the Caribou Mountains.

B. Insights into Sustainable Native Tourism Development in the Caribou Mountains

Based on the wide interpretations of sustainable development, it is difficult to determine where to start in examining the LRRC First Nation's potential for sustainable tourism development; and then offer insight into this process. Some researchers (e.g., Murphy, 1985; Inskeep, 1991) have articulated a path for sustainable tourism development that appears straightforward providing specific tenets are met. But others

(e.g., Hunter, 1995; 1997; Wall, 1997) have argued that even if the principles of sustainable tourism are met, they are not enough to affect sustainable development in a given region.

Wall (1997) has offered a useful perspective which not only conceptualizes sustainable development in a meaningful way but also provides a useful framework for examining its potential. He notes that, sustainable development has “come to be used in rather different ways: as a philosophy, as a process, as a plan and as a product” (Wall, 1997, p. 34). These perspectives are not mutually exclusive. If one understands which perspective is being articulated at any one time, then the ambiguous nature of sustainable development may be clarified. Wall’s critique of the variations of the term, *sustainable development*, provides an opportunity to examine the sustainable development process in the Caribou Mountains and to offer insight into the LRRC First Nation’s pursuit of sustainable tourism. Thus, sustainable tourism development in the Caribou Mountains will be examined using this framework of: a philosophy, a process, a plan and a product. By using these dimensions, insights will be generated that highlight important issues as they relate to sustainable native tourism development in the Caribou Mountains.

a) Philosophy

Sustainable development has been called a “holistic process” in which economic, social and environmental goals are balanced. Court (1990) noted that sustainable development should incorporate defining characteristics that support balanced community growth, prosperity and that meet the basic needs of the community. Tourism scholars

have advocated the concept of sustainable tourism which is premised on the philosophy of sustainable development. As Hawkes and Williams (1993) have argued, sustainable tourism “embodies a challenge to develop the world’s tourism capacity and the qualities of its products without adversely affecting the environment that maintains and nurtures them” (p. V). Furthermore, it has been suggested that sustainable tourism development should incorporate a broader development approach that includes other economic sectors. How do the tenets of both sustainable development and sustainable tourism reflect the LRRC’s philosophical approach to development? More importantly, is the LRRC First Nation undertaking a sustainable approach to tourism development?

First Nation people have generally been regarded as having a unique connection to the natural environment which is exhibited through a respectful relationship with the land and its creatures (Clarkson, Morissette & Regallet, 1992). However, this stereotypical relationship has been questioned (e.g., Hinch, 1998) and although this relationship might exist for some native and even non-native individuals, it is not necessarily true for all First Nation communities. The LRRC First Nation have expressed a unique and respectful relationship with the earth that has been demonstrated at several levels. For example, Andrew noted that for “each animal I kill, I give a tobacco offering for the life I was taking that the Creator give back whatever species I have taken” (Interview, October, 1997). In referring to bison which are sporadically found in the Caribou Mountains and adjacent Wood Buffalo National Park, Chief Sewepagaham (1997) said:

From our perspective, these animals are endowed with a spirit, much in

the same way that we, ourselves, are spiritual beings. They, as we, exist in both a physical and spiritual relationship to all other things in this Forest world, and in our interactions with them, we must respect this spiritual relationship. Our actions must not alter this relationship or affect their nature as a spiritual being (p. 3).

A LRRC First Nation woman visiting Margaret Lake with her daughter noted that:

The Caribou Mountains are special to me and my people.

The water is part of me...even the burnt trees and their carbon. They're a part of me. I bring my daughter up here so she can learn this. This is what I tell her.

(Interview, August, 1997)

These comments from LRRC individuals reflect a deep-felt relationship to the land and to the Caribou Mountains in particular. Implied in these comments are the issues of respect, empowerment, and reciprocity. These principles reflect the underlying tenets of Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) that the LRRC have insisted be integrated into research and development in the Caribou Mountains. However, the LRRC do not believe Euro-Canadians embrace these same attitudes toward the land.

They see themselves as standing outside of the landscape, and its master, they divide the landscape into distinct portions which separates use from

protection, and within which the notion of balance is lost (Sewepagaham, 1998, p. 325).

In a letter to Fred Jobin, Regional Director of DIAND, the LRRC state:

We believe that the recognition, application and integration of TEK may be the key to resolving the age-old dilemma that development of the natural resources of the lands will cause irreversible damage. If the Province insists upon proceeding with development of these resources, we must demand that the planning processes... incorporate and integrate TEK (Sewepagaham, 1997, p. 2).

The LRRC have not had the power, until relatively recently, to influence development on their traditional land. As noted earlier, the provincial and federal government have controlled many aspects of LRRC internal and external affairs. This dependent relationship has resulted in social, cultural and environmental crises within the LRRC First Nation. DIAND (1997) observed that:

only one quarter of the population aged 15 and older is employed in a wage-paying position. Sixty-five percent of the population is dependent on social assistance. Three-quarters of the population is under 30 years of age, and the rate of population growth is well over three percent per year (p. 58).

In an earlier chapter, economic, socio-cultural and political-environmental issues were highlighted as underlying motivations for tourism development. In retrospect, these motivations most likely reflect the LRRC's needs at any development level. Unlike other

development models which focus on economic development, the LRRC approach to development is focused on *human* development; a balanced type of development that simultaneously affects the social, cultural, political and environmental dimensions. This model of development sees no hierarchy. Observations on several conversations reflect this insight.

The advisors appear most interested in economic development, the Elders in cultural development, the Chief and Council in development of any kind as long as it meets both economic and social needs...Chief Johnsen Sewepagaham, especially appears interested in development that brings youths back into the cultural mosaic of the LRRC. I guess that's why he likes the idea of a cultural camp at Wentzel Lake.

(Personal Journal, August, 1997)

The Caribou Mountains are, for the LRRC First Nation, a place of spiritual sustenance based on relationships with the natural environment and its animals that emphasize respect, empowerment and reciprocity. Having lost control of the Caribou Mountains, the LRRC have also, in some respects, lost control of their own lives. One LRRC advisor noted that “the LRRC have been controlled by outside influences for too long...”(Field Journal, August, 1997). The ability to gain control and influence development in the Caribou Mountains is a key concern for the LRRC. This ability will allow a philosophical approach to development that reflects the LRRC’s cultural perspectives.

Sustainable tourism development is one strategy the LRRC are pursuing which

will allow them to address community needs by creating culturally appropriate activities in the Caribou Mountains. However, because the Caribou Mountains are controlled by both the forest industry and the provincial government, it may prove difficult for the LRRC to develop sustainable tourism. Given this situation, it has been necessary for the LRRC to enter into alliances with these stakeholder groups in order to gain greater control and to influence how the Caribou Mountains are developed and managed. This may be their only option for integrating their philosophical approach to development.

As a philosophy, the principles of sustainable development reflect in many ways the perspectives of the LRRC First Nation in regards to land use and development. Development must be patterned on the LRRC's traditional and contemporary relationship with the land. In doing so, development must meet the diverse needs of the community.

Sustainable tourism development can be achieved if the LRRC First Nation are able to integrate their philosophy of development with government and industry land use policies as they pertain to the Caribou Mountains. This success is based on the assumption that the LRRC have one philosophical perspective that relates to their relationship to the land. Judging from the perspectives I have encountered in the research process, it appears that most attitudes do indeed stress the principles of respect and reciprocity. However, there is certainly some diversity among the LRRC First Nation as a whole that this study has not captured. It would be interesting to determine what other philosophical dispositions are held among the LRRC First Nation. Understanding how these viewpoints inter-relate to those I have identified may prove even more insightful.

b) Process

A process articulates the methods necessary to bring about a desirable state (Wall, 1997). For example, how do the LRRC intend to develop sustainable tourism on their traditional land? How will community needs be met by this process? These questions need to be addressed but first, the LRRC must have the control to do so.

The LRRC First Nation currently lack the control to implement sustainable tourism on their tradition land. Zeppel (1998) argues that First Nation people's must have control to develop sustainable tourism. In addition, this development must not occur within a tourism vacuum, but must include consultation with other sectors of the economy. Jamal and Getz (1995) argue that various stakeholders should be involved in development decisions but ultimately, the development must reflect community needs. Addressing community needs through a participatory process that extends to various stakeholders permits a localized form of development that reflects community needs and their aspirations.

Tourism models (e.g., Murphy, 1985; Inskeep, 1991) tend to have a linear view of the tourism development process. Tourism research bears this out as studies often neglect to describe just how sustainable tourism development should be implemented. Perhaps these models assume that the communities under consideration have the prerequisites such as control to implement a community-based development project that truly reflects community needs and values. But surely there are other communities that lack the control and power needed to influence the scale and nature of development and instead have had tourism development projects imposed upon them (Mowforth & Munt, 1998). What

avenues then exist for these communities to gain more control over the development process?

In the early 1990s the LRRC purchased Margaret and Pitchimi Lake Lodges. This was a strategic investment which granted the LRRC sole tourism operator status in the Caribou Mountains. The purchase allowed the LRRC to implement management philosophies that were more relevant to their own cultural perspectives. In conjunction with this economic investment in the Caribou Mountains, the LRRC entered into a cooperative management agreement (CMA) with High Level Forest Products and the provincial and federal governments. This CMA is focused on a sustainable development strategy for a 30,000 square kilometer area of which the Caribou Mountains are included (DIAND, 1997).

DIAND (1997) has defined cooperative management agreements as “arrangements between Aboriginal people, government and other parties specifying their respective rights, powers, and obligations with respect to the management and allocations of resources in particular areas of Crown land” (p. 57). However, Stevenson (1997) critiques these arrangements through his claim that “invariably, the norms, rules and decision-making procedures agreed to in co-management agreements are not those of Aboriginal/First Nations peoples, but the state” (p. 1). Nevertheless, these agreements appear to be better than previous management policies in which aboriginal people had no control in decision-making regarding their traditional lands and their communities. The LRRC echo this sentiment and have implied that cooperative management is only an interim measure (Sewepagaham, 1998). Yet, this interim measure has already provided

the LRRC First Nation with more control over the Caribou Mountains (DIAND, 1997).

In 1996, the LRRC First Nation and the Sustainable Forestry Management Network Centres of Excellence based at the University of Alberta also signed a partnership agreement. Called the Caribou Mountain Research Partnership (CMRP), this alliance was formed in order to conduct research that would ultimately provide the government, forestry industry and the LRRC insight into sustainable forest management in the Caribou Mountains. The guiding principle of the CMRP was that “sustainable development of the boreal forest can only be achieved by developing a multidisciplinary approach that includes a true partnership with First Nations, and training of students, and thus the future generation of scientists, through world class integrative research programs” (CMRP, 1997, p. 2). Studies conducted under this partnership agreement included vegetation mapping, paleolimnology, water quality, aquatic macro invertebrates, subsistence moose harvesting and this study: sustainable native tourism development.

An important principle of this partnership included the understanding that sustainable development of the Caribou Mountains could not occur without First Nation input. Therefore, a primary goal of the CMRP was the integration of traditional ecological knowledge with scientific knowledge which was encouraged by partnering several academic researchers with members of the LRRC community, especially youth and Elders. This facilitated an opportunity for cross-cultural understanding and the transfer of both traditional knowledge and field-based research skills to the academic and native participants respectively.

Developing partnerships with industry, government and research institutions have

allowed the LRRC First Nation to gain more influence over how their traditional land is managed. These alliances have also provided members of the LRRC opportunities for education and training. In combination, more control and the skills necessary to use this control effectively enhance the potential for successful tourism development. During this research, this point was demonstrated quite poignantly.

Wentzel Lake, located at the extreme eastern edge of the Caribou Mountains plateau has unique ecological and geological features that make it promising for tourism development. In addition, campsites have already been developed by the LRRC that include fire pits and platforms for wall tents. When visiting Wentzel Lake in August 1996, I made the following entry in my journal.

Wentzel Lake is different from the other lakes I've seen...There are wide open beaches, sandy with aspen parkland rising gently from the shores ...We are camped on a sandy shore, the canvas tents tucked behind a windbreak of small stunted trees. Stunted, perhaps by the wind which I am told prevails from the southeast...Of all the lakes I've seen so far, Wentzel holds significant promise for some type of small scale tourism development.

(Field Journal, August, 1996)

Others also believed that Wentzel Lake held potential for tourism development. In a conversation with Chief Johnsen Sewepagaham, he indicated that:

...Wentzel Lake would be a good area to develop a tourism product based around a cultural theme. Elders could demonstrate traditional practices like

snaring, perhaps trapping and the use of medicinal and edible plants.

LRRC youths would assist the Elders and learn from them as well as non-native visitors... In fact, the Chief was so taken by this concept that he asked me to draft a pilot project for the following summer.

(Field Journal, August, 1997)

Unfortunately, this pilot project never transpired as the research ended prior to implementation. But in conducting inquiries related to Wentzel Lake, I discovered that under CMA the LRRC were able to re-direct forestry practice in the Wentzel Lake area in order to protect its unique qualities for other potential development opportunities. In an interview with a member of the forest industry who worked closely with the LRRC during this time, it was indicated that:

The LR [Little Red] want to know everything about their land so the LR [are] out there gathering as much as they can and we're out there gathering as much as we can as far as vegetation inventories and those kind of things. You know we're doing a kind of caribou use study and that's a fairly big project...they're all inter-related. We're trying to get all the data to make a management plan that best suits all the needs as best we can.

(Interview, July, 1998)

Through partnerships, LRRC have been able to effectively influence how their traditional land has been managed. Furthermore, the LRRC have utilized these alliances to acquire more information regarding the Caribou Mountains. But these alliance do not always work and must be adjusted from time to time. This was particularly true for the

Caribou Mountains Research Partnership (CMRP).

Although the CMRP had well meaning objectives that included First Nation input and integration of traditional knowledge with scientific knowledge, the LRRC were concerned with how TEK was being integrated with the ongoing research. The LRRC were also troubled by the progress, pace, goals and financial aspects of some of the CMRP projects including the tourism study. My personal journal reflects these concerns articulated by an advisor to the LRRC at a late night meeting of the CMRP held in the Caribou Mountains. My own concerns are noted as well.

Tonight was a night of reckoning. I feel like packing my bags and leaving as I have never been treated so disrespectfully. Bill had an agenda of issues to cover and did he cover them... First, we were wasting their [LRRC] money and lots of it. Secondly, we have apparently insulted members of the LRRC who have been working with us although Bill did not suggest who or how we insulted them. Third, it seems we keep changing our research objectives without consulting him... As his ass is on the line for the success of this partnership and its outcomes, he suggested in so many words that we all get our acts together or we might as well pack and leave tonight.

(Personal Journal, August, 1997)

It is not surprising that challenges arose during the research projects related to the CMRP. Although collaborative research goals had been established that included an inclusion of TEK, it proved difficult to satisfy the LRRC First Nation needs and the

academic demands simultaneously. This issue will be explored in more depth in the final chapter.

These processes represent an opportunity for the LRRC to manage their land sustainably. In these processes, the LRRC have been able to address their needs related to economic and social development. Sustainable tourism development will depend on the success of these partnerships since controlling, understanding and implementing land-use activities are critical components of the development of nature-based tourism products. Thus, the link between sustainable tourism development and the other dimensions of use in the Caribou Mountains is pivotal to the success for sustainable development overall. However, the processes associated with these partnerships are complex and must be addressed for a meaningful plan to occur that affects sustainable development.

c) Plan

A plan outlines “specific steps through which desirable future states are to be achieved” (Wall, 1997, p. 37). In the case of planning for sustainable tourism development, basic strategies are clearly articulated (e.g., Inskeep, 1991). They often include a visioning process (Ritchie, 1993) which enables a community to decide on the type of tourism which they feel is suitable, followed by an identification of the steps needed to realize this vision. However, not all communities necessarily follow a linear plan. Although a vision or a sequential plan could offer the LRRC a route by which to address their long term needs, they have felt no need to develop one. This was indicated early in my research by an advisor to the LRRC as we were driving to northern Alberta

on my first visit to the Caribou Mountains.

Arrived late tonight (1 am)- tired after driving for eight hours from Edmonton. Want to sleep but I'm afraid I'll forget some things... It seems the LR have no plans for anything except they want to do about everything. Not too sure how this is all going to happen... I suggested that they [LRRC] might want to consider coming up with a plan, goal, or something to aim for. "Too soon for that" I was told, we just want to know what we've got... Then-they'll [LRRC] figure out what to do with it.

(Personal Journal, June, 1996)

At one point, the LRRC did have a plan, at least back in 1988 when they articulated their tourism goals in the Community Tourism Action Plan (CTAP). In this plan, the LRRC proposed "to develop and operate a fly-in fishing operation situated in the Caribou Mountains of North Central Alberta" (Alberta Tourism, 1988, p. 1). The expected outcomes of this plan were to position the LRRC community on the "leading edge" of sport fishery development leading to an increased revenue flow. Despite this start, the LRRC have not articulated additional tourism plans. Instead they have been involved in just "about everything."

While the LRRC First Nation have not developed a specific approach to tourism development, they have been heavily involved in funding research that will enable them to plan for sustainable tourism development if and when they are ready. Thus, they have actively been involved in research partnerships with the University of Alberta, environmental advocacy groups, the forestry industry and the provincial and federal

governments. As one advisor to the LRRC noted, “we have researchers like you all over the place asking questions about this and that” (Field Journal, August, 1996).

In addition to the research being conducted through partnership arrangements with the forestry industry, government and research institutions, the LRRC have initiated additional studies related to vegetational, biological and cultural inventories. Biological studies have focused on the collection of data related to birds, animals, plants and aquatic species found in the area. “Elders are actively participating in [these] project[s], and there are research apprenticeship positions for community members” (DIAND, 1997, p. 61). Cultural inventories have recorded traditional camping sites, burial sites, sacred sites and trails. Based on these studies, maps will be used to identify areas unsuitable for logging due to their cultural or environmental significance (DIAND, 1997). Ultimately, this type of information could provide the data needed to develop sustainable tourism and perhaps, overall sustainable use of the Caribou Mountains.

It appears that the LRRC First Nation’s strategy for development in the Caribou Mountains is more reflective of a “muddling through” process in which they are doing about everything but accomplishing nothing. The LRRC’s approach to development in the Caribou Mountains is in stark contrast to rational processes of development and instead, reflects a disjointed incrementalist approach as described by Burton (1989). Thus, rather than focusing on the *means* by which to develop, the LRRC are more concerned with the *ends* that emphasize a flexible and relatively open structure in obtaining their desired future state: sustainable development of the Caribou Mountains. Partnership formation is inherent to this process (Swinnerton, 1999) in addition to the

valuing of alternative forms of knowledge articulated by the social planning model (Stankey, McCool, Clark & Brown, 1999). Thus, although the LRRC do not have a clearly defined plan in which to initiate sustainable development in the Caribou Mountains, the processes which they are currently engaged in are legitimate means for acquiring their specified ends.

The LRRC do not have a plan for sustainable tourism development. What they do have and are continuing to obtain is the information and the skills required to use this information that will enable them to potentially develop sustainable tourism in the Caribou Mountains. As Wight (1998) notes, “the relationship between tourism and the overall environment is critical: if the natural environment or the culture is damaged...then we lose a positive force motivating people to sustain and enrich the environment” (p. 75). The LRRC are therefore, attempting to capture an overall understanding of the cultural and environmental values that exist in their traditional territory that will enable them to make decisions regarding development in the Caribou Mountains.

d) Product

A sustainable tourism product is a reflection of the philosophy, process, and a well conceived, developed and implemented plan by a community (Wall, 1997). A sustainable tourism product must meet the fundamental needs and aspirations of the community. However, the ultimate success of sustainable tourism will depend on the skills with which the product is offered.

Early in my research, a LRRC advisor observed, “tourism development of any

kind will offer advantages to the LRRC people. But tourism development that is consistent with who they are and how they live with the land will offer the greatest advantages" (Field Journal, May, 1996). In this dissertation several forms of tourism have been articulated as desirable for the LRRC: most notably ecotourism and trap-line tourism. It was noted earlier that perhaps ecotourism may place the LRRC in a precarious position between balancing their cultural practices which have traditionally been consumptive in nature against the sensitivities of ecotourists who may not want to be exposed to the harsh reality associated with living on and from the land. In addition, the development of ecotourism might present a paradox for the LRRC who have expressed the desire to develop a type of tourism that reflects their cultural philosophy and their traditional and contemporary relationship to the Caribou Mountains. Perhaps ecotourism development could allow this, but the concept of trap-line tourism development presents greater possibilities for the successful integration of cultural values and practices with their traditional land. Yet, as one senior advisor to the LRRC noted "we don't really know what we want to do with tourism in the Caribou Mountains, but we do know that tourism will offer us more opportunities for sustainable use of the Caribou plateau" (Field Journal, August, 1996).

Trap-line tourism provides the LRRC First Nation an opportunity to develop sustainable tourism in the Caribou Mountains established on several underlying factors. First, trap-line tourism allows the LRRC to develop a tourism product based on cultural values which simultaneously addresses community needs. As noted earlier in this study, the trap-line is a place where the principles of respect, empowerment and reciprocity are

taught. These ethics form the value base of the LRRC First Nation culture. Elders have expressed concern that these values are becoming lost among the LRRC youth. Trap-line tourism could potentially provide the setting where these values are reinforced by providing opportunities for youth to interact with Elders. Trap-line tourism can also help stimulate and diversify the LRRC economy. Although the development of trap-line tourism may do little to alter the financial state of Margaret Lake Lodge, it could provide economic opportunities for a small number of LRRC trappers. The income derived from trap-line tours would offset reliance on social assistance and augment income from other sources.

With greater management control of the Caribou Mountains through partnership agreements, the LRRC can potentially restrict non-compatible tourism and recreation uses that affect sustainability. Although the LRRC indicated a desire to restrict and manage recreational hunting and fishing activities that they believed competed and conflicted with their traditional pursuits in their Community Tourism Action Plan (Alberta Tourism, 1988), they had little authority to do so. However, with growing control through the acquisition of two sport-fishing lodges, the LRRC are moving closer to becoming the sole provider of recreation and tourism opportunities in the Caribou Mountains. Providing that LRRC actively manage the tourism experiences they choose to offer and progress with their broader sustainable use plans for the Caribou Mountains, the potential for sustainable tourism development is very good.

Although the LRRC must have control over their traditional territory to increase the likelihood of sustainable tourism development, they must also have the skills to

deliver high quality tourism experiences. However, knowledge related to tourism development and its practical components such as management and hospitality skills are lacking in the LRRC community. This became evident early in the research as I noted in my journal that:

Margaret Lake Lodge has been managed by non-natives since its beginning. When I asked Bill about this he said that although LR folks could act as fishing guides and cooks-they didn't have the management or hospitality skills needed to manage the lodge. He suggested that in time, these skills would be acquired and that eventually LR people would be the only people employed at the lodge...

(Field Journal, August, 1996)

My experience on the trap-line highlighted several issues regarding the LRRC lack of tourism related skills. In particular I commented on the level of instruction that a tourist might expect for some activities like snowmobiling and the low degree of social interaction between the host and guest. While some of these issues are culturally based and can potentially be addressed through careful management, others are not and must be examined in order for tourism to be sustainable. These thoughts are reflected in a journal entry made shortly after a discussion I had with Chief Johnsen Sewepagaham.

Bill and I discussed the Chief's suggestion related to the development of a cultural camp (pilot project) based at Wentzel Lake...Besides providing an opportunity to figure out what to provide in terms of the tourist experience, Bill thought I should also develop some sort of tourism

training manual for the participants-not the Elders-but the kids. The manual should give them an idea of what tourists expect, what skills they need...Bill wasn't sure if some kids could even safely paddle a canoe...

(Field Journal, August, 1997)

On two separate occasions I addressed the issue of skill development in reports I submitted to the LRRC advisor responsible for research in the Caribou Mountains. These reports had been requested as a way of providing immediate and practical tourism assistance. In these reports I indicated the types of hospitality and service skills necessary to provide a successful tourism experience as well as technical skills such as first aid and navigation. I also suggested the LRRC contact the Canadian National Aboriginal Tourism Association (CNATA). In a separate report I sent to the LRRC, I discussed CNATA and the type of questions and processes they suggest for native communities interested in tourism development. In my letter I wrote:

The Canadian National Aboriginal Tourism Association (CNATA), a First Nation led organization recommends that tourism be carefully planned.

The two questions that must be answered are: how much tourism is desired; and what kind of tourism is preferred? Other questions important to answer are: why is tourism development wanted in the first place and what do your people understand of tourism? In answering these questions, a meaningful tourism plan and strategy can be developed which can lead to successful implementation of a tourism product.

(Letter to the LRRC First Nation, May, 1997)

It quickly became evident, however, that the LRRC were uninterested in working with CNATA, particularly since they were perceived, at least by one individual as a federal authority. “Bill said they wanted nothing to do with federal aboriginal groups and seemed a bit upset that I would even suggest this” (Personal Journal, June, 1997). That this transpired is not surprising given the mistrust by the LRRC of anything seemingly related to the federal government even though CNATA was originally a non-governmental organization (NGO).

Through the CMA, the LRRC have been able to develop sustainable products related to forestry. It is this partnership and others like this, that have provided the LRRC with greater control and skills with which to manage their traditional land sustainably. Zeppel (1998) observes that native tourism development is increasingly becoming supported by NGOs, aid agencies, academic consultants and environmental groups. In fact, the Western Canada Wilderness Committee (WCWC) attempted to partner with the LRRC First Nation in order to develop ecotourism products in the Caribou Mountains. It was understood that this arrangement would also provide opportunities for several LRRC youth to learn about nature-based tour guiding. Unfortunately, these trips never transpired as the WCWC were unable to fill their trips with clients. While this opportunity was unsuccessful, it provides insight into other methods the LRRC can utilize to gain the skills necessary to operate tourism experiences.

Perhaps the LRRC may be able to acquire the skills necessary to develop and operate sustainable tourism products by partnering with other tourism operators whose philosophy and services match those of the LRRC. As this model appears to be working

with other economic sectors like forestry, it may also work in gaining the much needed skills required for sustainable tourism. Ian Kean, owner and operator of River League, based in Vancouver, British Columbia currently employs several Taku River Tlingit First Nation youth as river guides on the Taku River (Personal Communication, 1999). As his river trips pass through Tlingit First Nation traditional territory, the River League and the Tlingit have entered upon an agreement that provides access for these trips in exchange for guide training. It is important to note that the operating policies of the River League reflect the key cultural values of the Taku River Tlingit First Nation.

The development of a sustainable tourism product is, indeed, complex. To be sustainable it must not only reflect the integration of philosophy, process, and a plan, but in doing so it must meet community needs. Also, those engaged in delivering the tourism product must have a well developed set of tourism and hospitality skills. Without these skills, it will be difficult to sustain the tourism enterprise. The LRRC First Nation is in the initial stage of tourism development; a stage that is characterized by the exploration of opportunities that reflect their traditional relationship with the land and their basic community needs and aspirations. Trap-line tourism was indicated as one tourism product that might allow these goals to be reached.

C. Discussion and Conclusion

I have come to understand that the LRRC First Nation do indeed, have the potential to develop a form of sustainable tourism on their traditional lands. This understanding was facilitated by exploring the LRRC First Nation's experience through

four concepts that together, offer an explanation of the complex issues associated with the processes of sustainable development. These specific insights relate to the philosophy, the process, the plan and the product of development; all of which must interact in order to achieve a sustainable outcome. The points listed below capture both philosophical and pragmatic perspectives related to the LRRC's initial exploration of sustainable tourism development.

- In order to achieve sustainable tourism development on their traditional land, the LRRC First Nation must have control to both protect the land and to develop opportunities that reflect their relationship to the land.
- The LRRC are committed to *human* development that meets the identified needs of their people. Sustainable tourism development is *human* development that must meet community needs. These needs (economic, socio-cultural, political-environmental) are not hierarchical.
- In order to affect sustainable tourism in the Caribou Mountains, the LRRC First Nation must enter into partnerships that offer them control in the decision-making processes as they relate to land-use management in the Caribou Mountains.
- Partnerships with industry, government and educational institutions offer the LRRC opportunities for training and education. These skills are valuable as they provide the LRRC the capacities required for sustainable management.

- Although partnerships have provided the LRRC with control and training opportunities, they have been entered into as a necessity. In addition, the degree to which the LRRC have been able to influence the acceptance of TEK by other partners is questionable.
- The LRRC First Nation has no specific tourism plan, although they are engaged in numerous studies that will offer them significant insight into how to manage the Caribou Mountains sustainably.
- Several members of the LRRC First Nation have identified trap-line tourism as a potential sustainable development opportunity. This type of tourism reflects their traditional and contemporary relationship to the land. Also, trap-line tourism development has the potential to address community needs. However, to achieve these goals and that of sustainability, the operators of the tourism product must have the appropriate skills necessary for the successful implementation of the product.
- Tourism related job skills may be obtained through partnerships with other tourism operators. These arrangements, provided they are entered into carefully, may provide mutual benefits.

Sustainable tourism development is complex. This complexity is often hidden in the tenets and models that outline the processes associated with tourism development. For example, Murphy's (1985) model, while offering insight into the need to develop a

community-based tourism product, fails to articulate the complicated processes involved in this. Inskeep (1991) while noting the political and social dimensions in which tourism development occurs, does not offer a method with which to maneuver within this environment. Native tourism models (Smith, 1996) and development processes (Sofield & Birtles, 1996) although providing insight into the attributes of indigenous tourism development and methods for how it should proceed, neglect to fully appreciate the context of where the development is occurring. A prescribed format for tourism development is a false sense of security as the specific community context cannot necessarily be represented in these models. Communities are volatile, unstable, and can experience an ebb and flow of people. Each community will have its own unique set of concerns and needs that are based very specifically on their experience. Thus, while tourism models might provide a path for development that includes a recognition of the inter-relatedness of various components, they cannot be expected to account for all of the unique complexities and desires of each different community. At least this is true for the LRRC First Nation.

The LRRC First Nation do, indeed, represent a complex community. Their history is based on oral tradition where the written word, until relatively recently, has held very little meaning. Their members have experienced extremely different lives from one another. That LRRC youth cannot relate to the ways of the Elders is not surprising. That these same youth have troubles relating to their parents is not surprising. Most communities across Canada have not been subject to relocation, residential schools, and the *Indian Act* which effectively formalized government control over First Nation peoples

in Canada. But recognizing that their lives have been externally controlled, the LRRC First Nation have initiated strategies to alter this condition. It appears that sustainable tourism development is one such strategy.

The purpose of this chapter was to provide insight into the processes associated with sustainable native tourism development. To accomplish this, it was necessary to extend the discussion to include processes associated with sustainable development in general for how could one discuss sustainable tourism without considering broader land use issues. Wall's (1997) conceptualization of sustainable development provided a useful framework for the discussion. Hence, sustainable tourism was discussed as both a philosophy, a process, a plan and a product. Furthermore, the discussion was premised on the contingency perspective that offers an approach with which to view native development. In this approach, native communities are removing themselves from a dependency relationship and entering into partnerships with native and non-native organizations that will allow them more control and the ability to pursue a form of development that meets community needs and reflects their relationship to the landscape.

Based on the ensuing discussion, key insights were generated. For example, from a philosophical perspective, the LRRC needed to integrate their cultural philosophy into how their traditional territory is managed. The best way to do this was to enter into partnerships with other stakeholders. These partnerships provided a greater degree of control and in some cases, training in data collection and analysis skills. These skills, coupled with the LRRC's growing autonomy may potentially be useful in the sustainable management of the Caribou Mountains.

Other significant issues raised were the need to develop a product that reflected the LRRC's traditional relationship to the land but also addressed community needs. Trap-line tourism, although not likely to contribute significantly from an economic point of view, has the potential to contribute to the social and cultural needs identified in the study. However, even though the LRRC may be able to effect overall sustainable development of the Caribou Mountains thereby influencing the degree to which tourism may be sustainable, additional skills are still required for the implementation of the tourism product. One method of acquiring these tourism related skills is the careful development of alliances with tourism operators that do not diminish the control the LRRC seek.

I noted that the LRRC has the potential to develop sustainable native tourism. This cautious wording denotes the difficulties and complexities associated with sustainable tourism development that are often disguised through carefully constructed development plans and models. Perhaps the most significant insight this study provides is the recognition that native communities must have the control to influence sustainable tourism development and that the process of gaining that control is where the insight is really provided. Academics engaged in native tourism development research would do well to first ascertain if the community has the control to effectively develop and maintain a sustainable tourism product. If control is lacking, then it is doubtful sustainable tourism and the broader goal of sustainable development can ever be achieved.

CHAPTER EIGHT

CONCLUSION: REFLECTIONS ON CONTENT AND PROCESS

On the basis of this research I was able to gain insight into several factors associated with the potential for sustainable tourism development in the Caribou Mountains. The underlying goal of this research was to describe and interpret the initial stages of sustainable tourism development by gaining insight into the LRRC's motivations and to the specific challenges they face. This study underscored the importance of using tourism as one of the strategies for gaining greater access and control of traditional land. It also recognized that in addition to tourism development other strategies were necessary to gain a greater degree of control and that collectively, these approaches increased the potential for sustainable development in the Caribou Mountains. At another level, the political dynamics of this study have led me to reflect more specifically on my professional relationship with the LRRC First Nation and their advisors. In this final chapter, I will reflect on both the theoretical/applied aspects of this study and the research process from which these elements were addressed.

A. Reflections on the Theoretical and Applied Aspects of the Research

My reflections on the theoretical and applied elements of this research come at several levels. First, it is important to reexamine the research approach with which I undertook this study and to suggest how this may have affected my interpretations.

Second, it is necessary to reexamine the objectives of the research and determine to what extent they were addressed from a theoretical and applied perspective.

My theoretical approach was based on the understanding that native people in Canada and throughout the world have been marginalized. This perspective has been informed by dependency theory which assumes an inequitable distribution of control resulting in the systematic exploitation of one group over another (Dos Santos, 1970; Frank, 1972). Indigenous control over social, cultural, and economic systems is subordinate in this type of relationship. The Government of Canada's historical policies of assimilation and acculturation have effectively diminished indigenous control over economic, cultural and social systems. Native people in Canada, including the LRRC First Nation, currently possess little access and control over traditional resources. More importantly, they have begun to lose their spiritual connection with the land. Among many pathologies which arise from such a condition, apathy prevails. This has led to high rates of suicide, drug dependency and alcoholism in many indigenous communities throughout Canada. By acknowledging my perception of these issues, I have come to understand that my research and analysis were conducted through this lens. Therefore, it is not surprising that the central theme that has arisen from this study concerns the nature of control in the LRRC community.

Although I began my research with the dependency perspective, I came to understand that the LRRC First Nation was attempting to address their dependent relationship through development processes with other non-native partners. Inherent in these processes was the insistence by the LRRC that their philosophical beliefs based on

a long association with the land, be integrated into these management alliances. These alliances, for the LRRC First Nation became, in fact, a vehicle for gaining a greater degree of control over their traditional land.

The contingency perspective offered an additional lens through which to view the LRRC First Nation's approach to development. This development perspective recognizes the need for First Nation's to partner with other non-native organizations in order to acquire greater autonomy and to influence the scale and nature of local development. These alliances were also viewed as a means for transferring much needed job skills to First Nation peoples. Nevertheless, inherent in this perspective is the fact that native communities like the LRRC First Nation have had very little choice but to enter reluctantly into partnerships and accept the market economy. Thus, in many respects the contingency perspective demonstrates a new type of control; one that is enforced by a growing global market economy. In this situation, it is doubtful that these partnerships can ever truly reflect a true sharing of knowledge. Instead, strategic approaches based on the contingency perspective appear to act as ladders in which First Nation peoples have climbed up only to find that things have not really changed.

This research sought to interpret and describe the initial sustainable tourism development process in the Caribou Mountains. In an effort to narrow this broad objective into more specific research goals, the study concentrated on: exploring the motivations for tourism development, examining the challenges of tourism development as they relate to a particular tourism experience, and, providing insight into the processes associated with the pursuit of sustainable native tourism development in the Caribou

Mountains. As this study has drawn to a close, it is useful to reflect on the implications the findings have for both the theoretical and applied understanding of indigenous tourism development.

Motivations for tourism development have largely focused on the economic benefits that might accrue to communities as a result of this type of development. Given the “boom and bust” cycles of many economies, especially those dependent on a single industry, tourism has been viewed as an alternative development strategy meant to diversify the local economy by taking advantage of unique community attributes including its heritage, culture and surrounding natural environment. Because of the potential economic benefits that tourism development may provide, communities across Canada have often pursued this type of development (Prentice, 1993; Simmons, 1994). Given that many native communities are economically depressed yet are in a position to offer a unique tourism product, it is not surprising that tourism development is appealing.

The ability of tourism development to benefit indigenous people beyond economic terms has been rarely discussed in depth. (e.g., Hinch, 1995; de Burlo, 1996). As de Burlo (1996, p. 257) indicates “economic gains are not exclusively the motivation for indigenous people to become involved in tourism.” While this view has not been discussed in a tourism context to any great extent, it has received considerable attention in native development studies. For instance, Elias (1995, p. viii) notes that “since the late 1960s, aboriginal people have advocated a comprehensive approach to development that encourages simultaneous progress towards political, cultural, and economic goals.”

Despite the fact that the LRRC community is economically depressed and in

desperate need of sustainable economic growth, this need has not supplanted the importance of other motivating factors such as those related to socio-cultural, political, and environmental needs. In fact, it would be hard to argue that the LRRC's motivations for tourism are hierarchically ordered. Instead, it appears that all motivations are linked mutually in that the perspectives from which they are derived have a common goal: that of greater control among the LRRC people to the extent that they become masters of their own destiny.

Understanding that the LRRC's motivations for tourism development are not purely based on economic motivations is significant to the understanding of indigenous tourism development in general. Although this study focused on a single native community, it is likely that other native communities across Canada, having experienced similar challenges, might also see the potential benefits tourism may bring to social, cultural, political, and environmental dimensions of their lives. Of greater significance, however, is the understanding that motivations for tourism development, at least among the members of the LRRC First Nation and their advisors, are linked by a desire to gain more control.

Tourism literature offers little insight regarding the issue of control and its relationship to motivations. Although White (1993) and Altman (1989) discuss the ability of economic development to strengthen indigenous communities adjacent to protected areas, they do not discuss this development in relation to gaining more indigenous control over economic, social and cultural dimensions. However, many indigenous communities have suffered from a loss of control in the course of their relationship with the dominant

cultural groups. As the LRRC have certainly experienced a diminution of control, tourism has become one mechanism in which to return toward greater autonomy. As indigenous tourism has become defined as “tourism activity in which indigenous people are directly involved either through control and/or having their culture serve as the essence of the attraction” (Hinch & Butler, 1996, p. 9), a complementary definition is that indigenous tourism must allow native communities to move toward a position of greater control. The former definition (Hinch & Butler, 1996) is pragmatic in that it addresses what appropriate indigenous tourism looks like, the latter definition of indigenous tourism explains the philosophy under which development should be approached.

These explanations of indigenous tourism are reflected in how the challenges of developing trap-line tourism were examined. True, there will be significant challenges to the development of any type of tourism by the LRRC First Nation that might include problems related to commodification, hospitality and service, and the nature of the type of tourism developed. But these issues can be mitigated assuming the LRRC have some control. For example, if the LRRC are concerned about commodification of their culture, they can then decide to either eliminate this aspect from the tourism experience, or consider the appropriate level and type of cultural content in the tourism experience. Issues related to hospitality and service can be approached through appropriate training and pro-active marketing that prepares the potential tourists for their experience in the Caribou Mountains. In this way, the LRRC can regain control over this aspect of tourism. By maintaining control, the tourism product remains truly indigenous even if it takes a contemporary form.

Exploring challenges related to trap-line tourism from a philosophical perspective and taking into account the alternative explanation of indigenous tourism provides a unique explanation of the LRRC's pursuit of tourism development. The development of trap-line tourism based on the motivations demonstrated in this research provides a medium in which to gain greater control by the LRRC First Nation. Greater control helps to ensure the authenticity of this indigenous tourism product.

Understanding the LRRC's motivations and challenges offers insight into the sustainable tourism development process in the Caribou Mountains. First, the analysis of the LRRC's motivations for tourism development and the challenges associated with trap-line tourism highlights the issue of control. It became apparent that the LRRC are an aboriginal society with little control over their lives. Even worse, the LRRC have no control over how their traditional land, the Caribou Mountains, are utilized by industry and government. Thus, the prospect of offering insight into the sustainable development process by focusing only on tourism issues seemed meaningless. It became apparent that to offer insight it would be necessary to examine other issues outside the tourism context. Based on this exploration I was able to determine that LRRC do, in fact, have the potential to develop sustainable tourism. This potential depends on their ability to truly integrate their traditional philosophy with the contemporary processes associated with managing the Caribou Mountains. Also, it depends on the willingness among the LRRC alliances to integrate traditional ways of knowing into how business is conducted in the area.

At a pragmatic level, it was noted that these alliances provided the LRRC

opportunities to develop skills that would enable them to manage the Caribou Mountains sustainably. For example, it was noted how the LRRC have initiated inventory studies related to their culture and biological resources on their traditional lands. This kind of information could help the LRRC to achieve sustainable tourism by understanding, for example, what cultural sites should be restricted to visitation and to determine the carrying capacity of certain natural environments. Ultimately, the success of sustainable tourism and sustainable development in the Caribou Mountains will also depend on their ability to effectively use their acquired skills and knowledge.

On the surface it may appear that the LRRC are in a position to utilize the Caribou Mountains for sustainable activities like tourism since they have begun to acquire more control: one of the essential ingredients to sustainable native tourism development. Widely used tourism models (e.g., Murphy, 1985; Inskeep, 1991) also suggest that the LRRC are poised for the development of sustainable tourism. In reality, the success of sustainable tourism development depends much more on the dynamics within the community and between the stakeholders than on meeting the criteria established by academics in their models. True, tourism development models offer insight, but they do not present the complex reality of everyday life in communities.

Perhaps the most significant insight into the development of sustainable native tourism has been left unsaid and lies in understanding the everyday struggles a marginalized community like the LRRC encounter in trying to affect greater control over their lives. The LRRC, while able to exert more influence over how the Caribou Mountains are managed, still have high levels of welfare and unemployment, high rates

of alcohol and drug abuse, and a community that lacks many employment skills required by a globalizing economy. Thus, although the LRRC may have greater control over their traditional territory, sustainable tourism will also depend on the LRRC's ability to acquire the appropriate skills to develop, implement and evaluate their tourism products.

Though this research provided insight into indigenous sustainable tourism development in northern Alberta among the LRRC First Nation, it has also raised more questions which need further clarification from both a theoretical and applied perspective.

For example:

- Are the LRRC's motivations for tourism development similar to other First Nation groups across Canada?
- How will the LRRC work with tourist intermediaries (e.g., travel agents) in presenting their tourism products?
- What are the regional, provincial and national factors that will influence the LRRC First Nation's ability to effect sustainable tourism development?
- How do the LRRC First Nation strategies of development compare/differ with other First Nation groups across Canada?
- What is the relationship between the philosophy of sustainability and indigenous cultures? Is the assumption that an indigenous culture's practices are inherently sustainable correct, or is this idea a mistaken manifestation of popular culture?

In order to address these questions, collaborative research strategies will need to be designed that meet both the goals of the researcher and the community. These strategies must reflect a successful integration of western-based and native ways of knowing. It will

also be important to address these questions in a way that provides tangible benefits to the local native community. If these conditions are not met, it is unlikely that native communities like the LRRC First Nation will grant the necessary community access.

B. Reflections on the Research Process

Upon engaging in my research I was influenced and guided by the principles related to Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK), and community-based research. In Chapter 4, I discuss my original intentions to access TEK and to follow a community-based participatory research approach. Rather than re-working chapter 4 to inform the reader of what actually happened, I made a conscious decision to leave it as originally proposed and to use this final chapter to reflect on how these principles and research strategies actually transpired in the field. In the following sections I address the role of TEK and the nature of community-based research as it transpired in this study. I will conclude this dissertation by articulating lessons that I learned in this research in the context of these approaches.

a) The Role of Traditional Ecological Knowledge in this Study

When I began this research I was unaware of the significance of Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) and its ability to offer an alternative or more fully integrated perspective on goals associated with this project. However, as I became more involved with the LRRC First Nation and literature related to native people and development in Canada, I came to realize the significance of TEK and its substantive use

in northern research and development. The LRRC First Nation, for example, issued a letter to the Alberta government indicating their preference for the use of TEK and the principles by which it should be treated. In their letter, the LRRC defined TEK as, “a complex web of knowledge and understanding that has developed within the indigenous cultures and which has been passed from generation to generation of Aboriginal peoples” (Sewepagaham & Meneen, 1997, p. 1). In addition, the LRRC emphasized that TEK was accumulated knowledge in both the ecological and spiritual sense. This definition parallels that of Berkes (1993, p. 3) who states that TEK can be defined as “a cumulative body of knowledge and beliefs, handed down through generations by cultural transmissions, about the relationship of living beings (including humans) with one another and with their environment.”

TEK gained prominence and recognition in the 1970s during the Berger Inquiry into the social, environmental and economic impacts of proposed pipeline development in northeastern British Columbia and the Yukon Territory (Freeman, 1979). Brody’s (1989) *Maps and Dreams* eloquently describes his experience of documenting TEK from hunters and trappers in a small native community that was to be affected by the proposed pipeline development. This process highlighted the credibility of native hunters and trappers as interpreters of nature and began to legitimize their ability to offer insights other than those informed only by western-based scientific methods (Freeman, 1979). Subsequently, TEK has gained importance in providing insight into wild-life management (e.g. Nakashima, 1990) and environmental impact analysis (e.g. Sallenave, 1993). The LRRC, for example, have indicated a desire to integrate TEK with the ongoing biological

research being conducted in the Caribou Mountains.

Integrating TEK is difficult for several reasons. First, TEK is not a commodity that can be easily understood and incorporated into management principles as is often perceived by government agencies. The LRRCC First Nation state:

To fully appreciate TEK, it must be understood that traditional knowledge is not a commodity but an attribute which is central to the existence and identity of aboriginal peoples and has its existence only in their thoughts and discourse. It is one aspect of the collective consciousness of these people regarding their relationship to all other things. To separate TEK from the people who know and hold this knowledge (the “knowers”) would be to destroy a central part of their very being (Sewepagaham & Meneen, 1997, p. 2-3).

It appears the fear of commoditizing TEK is well grounded. From a natural resource management perspective there has been a drive to incorporate TEK into the planning process and in doing so, TEK becomes adjusted in such a way as to meet the requirements of government and industry (Cruikshank, 1998). Using classification systems and taxonomies removes TEK from the context from which it came. Unfortunately, tourism professionals (e.g. MacGregor, 1993) are being encouraged to consider TEK and ecotourism as a convenient marriage based on the assumption that nature-based tourists would want to be exposed to TEK. Underlying this assumption, however, is the likelihood that ecotourists would also prefer that TEK be conveniently packaged into a tourism product that might include, for example, a native Elder

explaining the significance of trapping as a cultural activity.

As noted by the LRRC, the context from which TEK is derived is paramount and cannot be separated from the person and their relationship to all living things. In conducting research in the Caribou Mountains, researchers, including myself, have been encouraged to discover TEK and integrate it with our findings through a protocol that appears to be constructed institutionally rather than emerging from the community. For example, native people have assisted researchers from the University of Alberta in conducting research that is developed and based on western scientific models. TEK, therefore, becomes something to be included as an appendix, or a separate chapter instead of discovering how best to integrate the two systems of knowledge. I find that my research in the Caribou Mountains has been indicative of this process. Thus, I have continually questioned how TEK has informed my study in a legitimate and sensitive manner.

The process of discovering the LRRC's motivations and challenges related to tourism development in the Caribou Mountains was not informed by TEK as much as it was informed by the principles which underlie the gathering of TEK: respect, reciprocity and empowerment. Although I was cognizant of the forces which have driven the LRRC to pursue alternative development strategies, my study was driven by my personal experience in the tourism industry and tourism literature. I am comfortable with this for several reasons.

This research was an opportunity to gain insight into the tourism development process in the Caribou Mountains as well as an opportunity to discover alternative ways

of knowing. Because of this, I became cognizant of the significance of TEK and the importance of exploring a meaningful process in which to discover this knowledge and incorporate it into the research. Thus, I recognize that education is continual and my ongoing tourism research will broaden my vision of how better to integrate TEK and the principles it represents.

I discussed these principles with Andrew while travelling on his trap-line in the Winter of 1997. It appears that these principles are as much about TEK as they are about how the LRRC view their relationship with all things. Reflecting on that experience now, I can begin to understand the importance of context and the need to design research and collection strategies that place the researcher in his/her informants environment rather than one created conveniently for data collection. If a lesson is to be learned both by myself and others engaged in tourism and other types of research, it is that of the necessity of developing a relationship built on trust and respect that will allow one the opportunity to position themselves in an environment from which to truly experience TEK.

b) The Role of Community-Based Research

In Chapter 4, community-based research was defined as “systematic inquiry aimed at generating information or understanding which contributes to community development. The research process may be used to validate or extend traditional knowledge; it can also be designed to generate new insights that lead to solutions to existing problems” (SSHRC, 1983, p. 2). Guyette (1983) has suggested that community-

based research can assist communities without social-political power by providing information that will allow them greater control over their lives. In my research, I was cognizant of the fact that the LRRC First Nation lacked significant control over their lives. As my research and analysis evolved, I became aware that it could provide insight into existing issues that might eventually lead to solutions. I use the words *could* and *might* because it is too soon to tell how my research will be interpreted among the decision-makers in the LRRC community.

An important aspect of community-based research is the ability to provide insight that will lead to improved knowledge, initiate action and ultimately lead to direct and indirect community benefits (Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996). Clearly there will be those benefits which are more direct and pronounced such as improved economic conditions in the short term while other benefits may be realized at a later date. During this research process, there was incongruence between the type of benefits expected and the timing of these benefits.

While I was not hired as a consultant, the expectations placed upon me by advisors to the LRRC appeared to place me in such a position. Thus, it soon became apparent that I was expected to deliver more than a thesis; I was expected to deliver a tourism product. I became the resident tourism *expert* which placed me in an awkward yet, powerful position. Awkward in the sense that I did not consider myself an expert. I relied very heavily on key figures in the LRRC community to share their ideas, experience and wisdom throughout my research. Community perception of my expertise actually diminished my ability to conduct research in the Caribou Mountains since as one

LRRC member noted, “you already know it all, why ask me?” Therefore, many times during this research when I asked questions related to the tourism development process, a very common reply was, “how come you want to know what I think, what do you think?” I became frustrated by this common response, especially when it came from advisors to the LRRC community who were well aware that my research depended on an exchange of information. From this frustration came the gradual understanding of community roles, particularly that of the advisors.

Brown and Kaplan (1981) have acknowledged the *messiness* of community-based research as it does not depend any one formula. This *messiness* is due in part to the researcher and those he/she collaborates with as community research “brings together parties whose inquiry objectives, research methodologies, and conceptual frameworks are very different; and the result may be misunderstanding, ambiguity, or conflict” (Brown & Kaplan, 1981). Being cognizant of these issues, I strived to remain open to alternative possibilities for learning and understanding, yet as I continued, I became aware of the overwhelming role of the LRRC’s non-native advisors.

I was surprised to find little if any reference to the contemporary role of native advisors in academic journals related to native studies, especially since I had come to realize their significance in the LRRC community. From an historical perspective, I came to understand that advisors or *cultural intermediaries* (Szasz, 1994, p. 21):

have contributed to the history of North America in significant albeit largely unheralded ways. Moving among the diverse peoples of this continent, they have breached language barriers, clarified diplomatic

misunderstandings, softened potential conflict, and awakened that commonality of spirit shared by the human race.....They have stepped outside while others have remained within.

Their roles have been diverse and shaped by personal experience, and the nature of the cross-cultural environment. Some cultural intermediaries acted as missionaries, others as traders, and teachers. In contemporary times, anthropologists and historians have often been considered cultural intermediaries as their research has offered understanding to cross-cultural differences. Determining the role of the present day native advisor is difficult as their role from an historical perspective has not been explored in depth. My gradual comprehension of their role began in early 1996. Alex, one of the LRRC advisors indicated that he oftentimes considered himself a diplomat as if the LRRC First Nation were actually a nation within a nation. Another advisor indicated that his role bridges the intersection between the two cultures.

He explained that in order to be successful in his role as advisor, it was necessary to understand both cultural systems from an economic, political and social perspective. It was also important that key decision-makers such as the Chief and council be cognizant of the dominant system in order to operate within its political arena. Reflecting on this explanation, I was struck by the immense responsibility placed upon the non-native advisors to act and speak on behalf of the LRRC First Nation. It was also apparent that these individuals were held in high regard by the Chief and council for their expertise on political and environmental issues. In fact, on one occasion when Chief Johnsen Sewepagaham was visiting the Caribou Mountains, he made it very clear that these men

(advisors) acted on his and the LRRC's behalf.

I discovered that the role of the advisors in the LRRC community and their level of involvement in the research had significant implications for my ability to conduct this research. As community research relies on a diverse set of understandings from various community members, I quickly discovered that my contact with different elements within the communities was limited as I was to work strictly in the surrounding Caribou Mountains. While working in the Caribou Mountains provided an excellent site for some data collection in the form of observations and informal interviews, it did not allow me an opportunity to discuss tourism development with a broader spectrum of community members including women as well as men. That this occurred illustrates the degree to which the research was controlled by these advisors in many instances. The LRRC's advisors were often the "official" voice of the community including that of the Chief and council.

After discerning the degree of control the advisors were able to exert over the research process, I began to question my ability to conduct community-based research. Despite the ability to offer insight into the theoretical and practical understanding of indigenous tourism that might enable the LRRC to develop a tourism strategy, I soon became aware that my understanding of community-based research was not being put into practice.

Community-based research is a complex process (St. Denis, 1992). There is no formula as to how it should occur as individual communities and researchers are unique and dynamic. A research approach for one community may not work for another.

Therefore, as a researcher interested in working within the principles of community-based research, one must negotiate how this process is to occur within each community. Since the LRRC place a great deal of trust in their advisors and they are ultimately responsible for the conduct of the research and its outcomes, one could suggest that this style of community-based research reflects the social-political conditions within the LRRC community.

From this discussion, I have attempted to underscore the theoretical and applied aspects of this research as well as those dimensions related to the process of my research, particularly TEK and community-based research. From insights gained during this study and my overall experience, I would like to summarize several key points that may assist others in conducting research in a similar context.

- Choose your research topic carefully. Cross-cultural community-based research requires a significant time commitment, patience, and flexibility in order to:
 - Understand the community's needs;
 - Understand who are the key decision-makers. Oftentimes these individuals will not hold formal positions of power in the community;
 - Start with a research topic that is flexible enough to incorporate issues suggested by others in the community.

- Understand that the process of research will become as important as its ultimate content. How one negotiates through this process is critical. Make sure to:
 - Communicate clearly with key decision-makers in the community;
 - Develop a schedule of meetings so that you may share your results on a regular basis;
 - Avoid jargon related to your research. For example, do not assume that everyone defines words like tourism and sustainable as you do. Be aware of the cultural interpretations of these words;
 - Understand the role of non-native intermediaries in the community.

I believe the issues on which these suggestions are based are not uncommon occurrences in native community-based tourism research. This is not surprising as native communities are dynamic and heavily involved in reshaping their future. What is surprising, however, is the lack of insight provided by other tourism studies regarding the complexities of conducting community-based research. This insight may prove more valuable in the end.

C. A Final Word

The title of this dissertation is, “Searching for Sustainable Tourism in the Caribou Mountains.” A fundamental question I ask myself is “have I found sustainable tourism?” No, I have not. However, I have been able to articulate useful insights that demonstrate how sustainable tourism and sustainable development may be achieved. These insights are both philosophical and practical. Thus, sustainable tourism may exist in the successful integration of these insights.

Upon successful completion of this dissertation, I will contact the LRRC First Nation and offer to meet with them at a mutually convenient time in order to present this research to the Chief, Band Council Members, Elders and the LRRC non-native advisors.

In closing, I would like to mention that in conducting this dissertation research, I learned more from the LRRC First Nation than they will learn from my work. I realize that the principles which underlie T̓EK (i.e., respect, reciprocity, and empowerment) can also contribute to other research initiatives regardless of cultural boundaries. I thank you.

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APPENDIX: INFORMED ORAL CONSENT FORM

University of Alberta

Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation

Sustainable Tourism Development Research

INFORMED ORAL CONSENT FORM

Research Project Title: Searching for Sustainable Tourism in the Caribou Mountains

Investigator: John W. Colton (403) 439-7174

The purpose of this study is to interpret and describe the initial process of tourism development in the Caribou Mountains. I am particularly interested in the motivations and challenges involved in this type of development. You have been identified as someone who can contribute to the study. Your participation is completely voluntary.

Each person will be interviewed from one to a maximum of three times. During these interviews you will be asked to describe your perspectives on sustainable tourism and sustainable tourism development. More specifically, you will be asked to describe the motivations for this development and also the challenges that your community may encounter in developing tourism. These interviews (from one half to one and a half hours in length) will be audio-taped and later transcribed. The tapes and their associated transcripts will be assigned a pseudo name and locked in a filing cabinet. After the first interview, efforts will be made to make the information available to you, so that you may comment on the accuracy of the investigator's interpretation of your 'data.'

The final research project, including quotations with pseudonyms, will be made available upon request and will be presented as part of a Doctoral thesis. The research findings may be published in a journal but the confidentiality of the subjects will be ensured. Although there may be more direct benefits to participants in this study, the research findings may assist tourism researchers, tour operators, and professionals within the tourism industry toward a deeper understanding of native tourism development.

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